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# LYDGATE'S FALL OF PRINCES

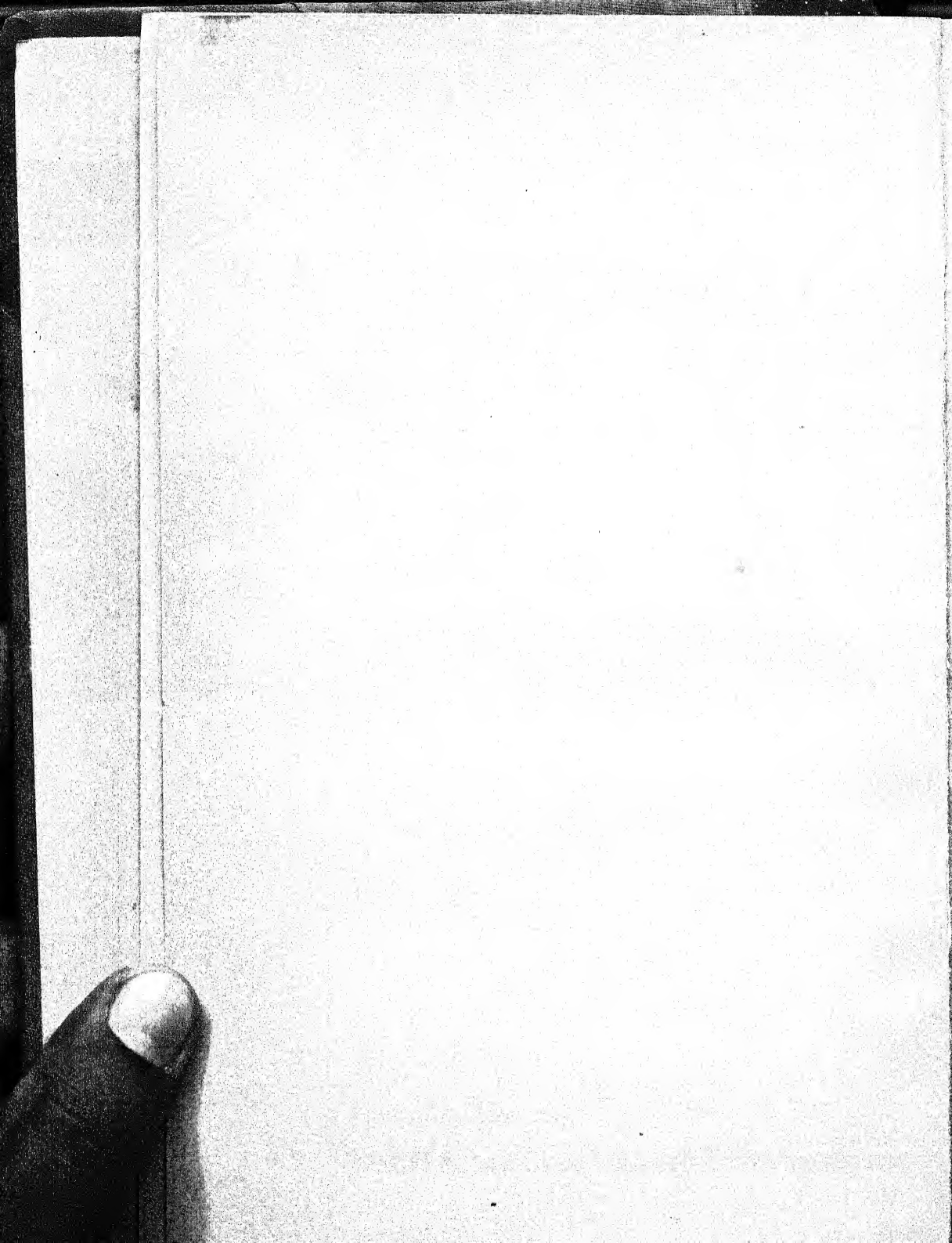
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PART II.  
(BOOKS III-V.)



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LYDGATE'S FALL OF PRINCES

PART II.

BOOKS III.-V.



THE FALL OF PRINCES



# BOOK III.

## [Prologue.]

**L**IK a pilgrym which that goth on foote, [p.144] Like a pilgrim  
And hath non hors to releue his trauaile, who goes wearily  
Hot, drie [&] wery, & fynde may no boote on foot and finds  
Off welle cold, whan thrust hym doth assaile, no spring to still  
Wyn nor licour, that may to hym auaile, his thirst, so fare  
Riht so fare I, which in my besynesse I, knowing no  
No socour fynde my rudnesse to redresse. 4 help for my  
rudeness.

I meene as thus: I ha[ue] no fressh licour  
Out off the conduitis off Calliope,  
Nor thoruh Clio in rethorik no flour  
In my labour for to refresshe me,  
Nor off the sustren, in noubre thries thre,  
Which with Cithera on Pernaso duell, —  
Thei neuer me gaff drynk onys off ther well!

8 I have no fressh  
water from the  
fountain of  
Calliope, no  
flower of speech  
from Clio to  
refresh my  
labour. Not  
12 once have I  
drunk of the  
well on  
Parnassus.

Nor off ther sprynges cleer & cristallyne,  
That sprang be touchyng off the Pegase,  
The fauour lakkith my makyng tenlumyne,  
I fynde ther bawme off so gret scarsete,  
To tame ther tunnyys with sum drope of plente;  
For Poliphemus thoruh his gret blyndnesse  
Hath in me dirked off Argus the brihtnesse.

The blindness of  
Polyphemus has  
16 darkened my  
eycs.

Our liff heer short, off wit the gret dulnesse,  
The heuy soule troublid with trauaile,  
And off memorie\* the glacyng brotilnesse, —  
Dreed & onkunnyng ha[ue] maad a strong bataile  
With werynesse my sperit to assaile,  
And with ther subtil crepyng in most queynte  
Ha[ue] maad my sperit in makyng for to feynte. 28

Our life here is  
short; wit is  
dull and memory  
untrustworthy.  
24 Dread and  
Ignorance have  
crept in to  
weaken my will  
to write.

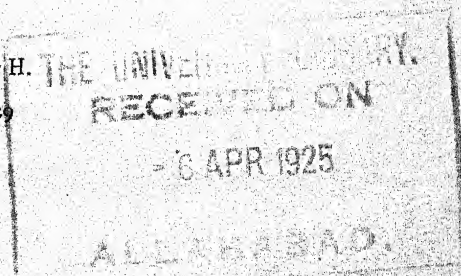
4. welle] wellis H.

7. No] None R.

9. conduitis] conductis R.

17. The] Ther R — makyng] fauour H.

24. off] om. R — memoire B.





- and my step-  
mother Oblivion  
has made a  
bastille of forget-  
fulness to shadow  
my reason and  
cause me to lose  
my way.
- And ouermor, the feerful frowardnesse  
Off my stepmooder callid oblyuyoun,  
Hath maad a bastille off foryetilnesse,  
To stoppe the passage & shadwe my resoun,  
That I myht haue no cleer direccioun  
In translatyng off newe to quikke me,  
Stories to write off old antiquite.
- 32
- Thus I stood  
in double doubt,  
between the  
desire to con-  
tinue my work  
of translating  
and Ignorance,  
who halted my  
pen.
- Thus was I set, and stood in double werre  
At the meetyng off feerful weies tweyne.  
The ton was this: who-euer list to lere,  
Where-as good[e] will gan me constreyne,  
Bochas taccomplisshe for to do my peyne,  
Cam Ignoraunce with a maas off dreede  
Mi penne tarreste; I durst[e] nat procede.
- 36
- When I con-  
sidered what I  
had undertaken,  
my pen quaked  
at the thought  
that I had almost  
abandoned my  
task;
- Thus be my-selff remembryng on this book,  
It to translate how I hadde vndirtake,  
Ful pale off cheer, astonyd in my look,  
Myn hand gan tremble; my penne I felte quake,  
That disespeired, I hadde almost forsake  
So gret a labour, dredful & inportable,  
It to parfourme I fond my-silff so onable.
- 44
- and when I saw  
how little I had  
accomplished, I  
stood checkmate  
for fear, like a  
wayfarer over-  
taken by night,
- Twen the residue off this gret iourne  
And litil part theroff that was begunne,  
I stood chekmaat for feer whan I gan see  
In my weie how litil I hadde runne;  
Lik taman that failed day & sunne,  
And hadde no liht taccomplisshe his viage,  
So ferr I stood a-bak in my passage.
- 48
- which came on,  
darkened by  
ignorance.  
I found no one  
to help me but  
the Pierides and  
Medusa, hard  
as stone.
- The nyht cam on, dirked with ignoraunce,  
Mi witt was dull be cleernesse to discerne  
In rethorik for lak off suffisaunce,  
The torchis out, & queynt was the lanterne.  
And in this caas my stile to gouerne,  
Me to forthre I fond non other muse  
But, hard as ston, Pierides and Meduse.
- 52
- Poverty ap-  
proached and  
old age: my  
purse was  
empty, and  
Bacchus  
far away.
- Support was non my dulnesse for to guie;  
Pouert approchid; in stal crokid age:  
Mercurie absent and Philologie;  
Mi purs ay liht and void off al coignage.
- 56
- 60
- 64

29. ferdful R. 31. bastille] bataile H, batell R 3.  
35. antiquite] auctorite H. 39. gan] can H.  
66. Philologie] philosophie H.

Bachus ferr off to glade my corage;  
 An ebbe off plente; scarsete atte fulle,  
 Which of an old man makth the sperit dulle.

68

But hope & trust to putte away dispair  
 Into my mynde off newe gan hem dresse;  
 And cheeff off all to make the wethir fair,  
 Mi lordis fredam and bounteuos largesse  
 Into myn herte brouht in such gladnesse,  
 That thoruh releuyng off his benygne grace,  
 Fals Indigence list me no mor manace.

72

But hope rose  
 again and the  
 weather bright-  
 ened, when my  
 lord's generosity  
 brought me  
 gladness and  
 relief.

76

A, how it is an hertli reioishyng  
 To serue a prynce that list to aduertise  
 Off ther seruauantis the feithful iust menyng,  
 And list considre to guerdone ther seruise.  
 And at a neede list hem nat despise,  
 But from al daunger that sholde hem noye or greue  
 Been euer redi to helpe hem and releue.

84

Ah, it is a  
 pleasure to  
 serve a prince  
 who is ready  
 80 to reward and  
 help those who  
 are dependent  
 upon him!

And thus releued be the goodliheed,  
 And thoruh the noblesse off this most knyhtli man,  
 Alle mystis cleerid off disespier & dreed,  
 Trust, hope and feith into myn herte ran;  
 And on my labour anon forthwith I gan:  
 For be cleer support off my lordis grace,  
 Al foreyn lettynge fro me I dede enchace.

[p. 145]

The mists of  
 despair and  
 dread vanished,  
 and I forthwith  
 began my  
 labour.

88

¶ Folkis that vse to make grete viages,  
 Which vndirfonge long trauaile & labour,  
 Whan thei ha[ue] doon gret part off ther passages,  
 Off werynesse tasswagen ther rigour,  
 Ageyn feyntise to fynde sum fauour,  
 Looke ofte ageyn, parcell to be releued,  
 To seen how moch ther iourne is a-cheued.

92

People who  
 make long  
 journeys or  
 undertake  
 laborious tasks,  
 often look back  
 to see how much  
 they have  
 96 accomplished,

Cause whi thei so offte looke ageyn,  
 Bakward turne look and eek visage,  
 Is onli this: that it may be seyn  
 To them how moch is doon off ther viage.  
 Eek weri folk that gon on pilgrymage  
 Reste hem sumwhile a ful large space,  
 Laborious soot to wipen from ther face.

and weary folk  
 who go on  
 100 pilgrimages  
 sometimes stop  
 to take a long  
 rest,

104

69. An] And R.

105. soot] swot H, swet R 3, swete P.

casting down  
their heavy  
burdens and  
drinking at cool  
springs and  
reckoning up the  
miles they have  
travelled.

Ther heuy fardell among thei caste doun  
At certeyn boundis to do ther bakkis ese,  
At wellis colde eek off entencioun 108  
Drynke fressh watris ther greuou thrust tapese,  
Or holsum wyne ther appetit to plesse,  
Reknynge the miles be computaciouns,  
Which thei ha[ue] passid, off castellis & off touns. 112

It comforts them  
to know how  
much of their  
journey is over;

It doth hem ese the noumbre for to knowe  
Sithe thei began off many gret iournees,  
Off hih[e] mounteyns and off valis lowe,  
And straunge sihtes passyng be cuntrees, 116  
Thunkouth bilyng off burwes & citees,  
Countyng the distaunce fro toun[e]s & the spacis:  
This ther talkyng at ther restyng placis.

and they also  
look forward to  
see what still lies  
before them.

The residue and the surplusage 120  
Thei rekne also off ther labour komyng,  
Thynke it is a maner auantage  
To haue & seen a cleer[e] knowlechyng  
Off thynges passid & thynges eek folwyng; 124  
For to ther hertis it doth ful gret plesaunce,  
Whan al such thyng is put in remembraunce.

Thus did John  
Bochas, and he  
was astonished  
when he con-  
sidered the Fall  
of Princes from  
Fortune's wheel,

And semblabli Iohn Bochas, as I fynde,  
Gan turne his bak, look and c[o]untenaunce, 128  
And to remembre, apoyntyng in his mynde  
To the stories rehersed in substaunce  
In his too bookis off sorwe & displesaunce, 132  
Hymself astonyd, merueilyng a gret deel  
The fall off pryncis fro Fortunys wheel.

knowing that  
they had brought  
their misfor-  
tunes upon  
themselves  
through excessive  
ambition and  
covetousness.

Off ther onhapp, as he doth reherce,  
Toward hemsilff the cause doth rebounde;  
Ther clymyng up the heuenes for to perce, 136  
In worldli richesse tencrecen and habounde,  
Ther gredi etik doth hemsilff confounde;  
And ther thrust off hauyng onstaunchable  
Causeth ther noblesse to be so variable. 140

High climbing up  
blunts the sight  
and causes men  
to fall; and those  
who covet too  
much shall lose  
everything.

Hih clymyng up, off resoun who can see,  
Dulleth off braynes the memoriall,  
Blunteth the sihte, in hih & low degre,  
Which from a-loffte makith hem haue a fall. 144

112. 2nd off] om. H.

116. be] the R. 117. burwes] Bourhes R.

118. distauncis H.

143. &] or H.

Men seyn off old, who that coueitith all,  
At onset hour suchon shal nat chese,  
But al his gadryng attonys he shal lese.

For worldli folk which so hih arise  
With the gret peis off worldli habundaunce,  
And with the weihte off froward couetise, —  
Namli wher Fortune holdeth the ballaunce, —  
With onwar turn off sum onhappi chaunce,  
This stormy queen, this double fals goddessse,  
Plungeth hem down from al ther gret richesse.

148 Fortune is  
always ready  
to plunge  
worldly folk  
down from  
their riches.

152

Wherefore Bochas heeroff to make a preeff  
Sheweth to purpos a sentence ful notable,  
A cleer exaample off onwar such myscheeff,  
Write off an auctour be maner off a fable,  
Al-be the menyng be ful comendable,  
And weel accordyng in conclusioun  
To the cleer purpos off this entencioun.

156 Therefore  
Bochas tells a  
fable to shew  
how such un-  
expected mis-  
chief comes.

160

### ¶ Finis Prologi.

### [Incipit liber Tercius]

[How Andalus doctor of Astronomey concludith/  
how princys sholdenot atwite constellacions nor  
fortune of theire vnhappy fallyng but theire owne  
demeritys and vicious lyuyng.]<sup>1</sup>

AT Naples whilom, as he doth specefie,  
In his youthe whan he to scoole went,  
Ther was a doctour off astronomie,  
Famous off cunnyng & riht excellent.  
Off hym rehersyng, shortli in sentement,  
His ioie was most to studyen and to wake;  
And he was callid Andalus the blake.  
He radde in schoolis the meuyng off the heuene,  
The kynde off sterris and constellaciouns,  
The cours also off the planetis seuene,  
Ther influencis and ther mocious,  
And heeld also in his opynyouns,  
The fall off pryncis, the cause weel out souht,  
Cam off thesillff & off Fortune nouht.

164 When Bochas  
went to school  
in Naples there  
was a doctor of  
astronomy called  
Andalus the  
Black, who  
understood the  
course of the  
stars and be-  
lieved that the  
Fall of Princes  
was caused by  
themselves alone  
and not by  
Fortuna.

172

154. gret] om. R. 156. ful] most H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 60 verso.



He held that  
neither the stars  
nor heaven are  
to blame for  
earthly misfor-  
tunes,

Nor the sterris wer nothyng to wite,  
Be ther meuyng nor be ther influence,  
Nor that men sholde off riht the heuene atwite  
For no froward worldli violence:  
For this clerk ther concluded in sentence,  
How men be vertu longe may contune  
From hurt off sterris outhur off Fortune.

176

180

of which the chief  
occasion is the  
viciousness of  
men, who have  
free choice to  
behave either  
well or ill.

Ther owne desert is cheeff occasioun  
Off the onhap, who-so taketh heede,  
And ther demeritis onwarli put hem down,  
Whan vicious liff doth ther bridil leede.  
Cours off Fortune nor off the sterris rede  
Hyndrith nothyng geyn ther felicite,  
Sithe off fre chois thei ha[ue] ful liberte.

184

188

God punishes  
sin in many  
ways; evil-doing  
always calls for  
retribution.

God punsheth synne in many maner wise;  
Summe he chastisith for ther owne auail:  
Men may off resoun in such cas deuse,  
Synne ay requereth vengauunce at his tail.  
God off Fortune taketh no counsail,

192

As for Fortune,  
no one is more  
independent of  
her than Glad  
Poverty, as  
Andalus used  
to say,  
relating to his  
pupils this fable.

Nor from hir meuyng no man is mor fre,  
As clerkis write,\* than is Glad Pouerte.

196

And onto purpos, this auctour ful notable,  
To his scoleris ther beyng in presence,

Ful demurli gan reherse a fable,  
With many a colour off sugred eloquence;  
Theron concludyng the summe off his sentence  
Touchyng a striff, which he dede expresse,  
Atwen Glad Pouert & this blynd godesse.

200

[A disputacion between fortune & glad pouert.]<sup>1</sup>

Once Glad  
Poverty, who  
looked like a  
dishevelled,  
tattered woman,  
sat where three  
roads met.

**Q**UOD Andalus: "Whilom off fortune  
In a streiht place ther sat Glad Pouerte,  
Which resemblid off look & figure  
A rekles woman, most ougli on to see,  
At a naruh meetyng off hih-weies thre,  
Al totorn, to-raggid and to-rent,  
A thousand pachchis vpon hir garnement.

204

208

178. atwite] awyte R. 180. concludyng H.

188. Hyndryng R — ther] the R.

196. writen B. 203. this] his H.

209. to-raggid] & raggid H.

210. garment R, garmente P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 60 verso.



She was hidous bothe off cheer and face,  
 And in semyng void off sorwe and dreed.  
 And bi that way as Fortune dede pace,  
 And off Glad Pouert sodenli took heed,  
 She gan to smyle & lauhhe at hir in deed,  
 Bi a maner scornynge in certeyn,  
 Off hir array she hadde so gret disdeyn.

She was very  
 212 unattractive,  
 but without  
 sorrow or fear;  
 and when  
 Fortune hap-  
 pened to come  
 along and  
 caught sight of  
 216 her, Fortune  
 began to laugh  
 at her ragged  
 clothes.

Whos froward lauhthe, whan Pouert dede espie  
 How she off hir hadde indignacioun,  
 She roos hire up off hih malencolie,  
 Pleynli to shewe hire entencioun,  
 Withoute good day or salutacioun,  
 Doyng to Fortune no maner reuerence,  
 Vnder these woordis declaryng hir sentence:

At this Poverty  
 arose indig-  
 nantly, and  
 without bidding  
 220 Fortune good-  
 day said:

¶ 'O thou Fortune, most fool off foolis all,  
 What cause hastow for to lauhhe at me,  
 Or what disdeyn is in thyn herte fall?  
 Spare neueradeel, tell on, lat me see,  
 For I ful litil haue a-do with the;  
 Off old nor newe I ha[ue] noon aqueyntaunce  
 Nouthur with the nor with thi gouernaunce.'

224 "O Fortune,  
 greatest of all  
 fools, why do  
 you laugh at  
 me? We have  
 very small  
 228 acquaintance  
 with one  
 another."

And whan Fortune beholdeth the maneer  
 Off Glad Pouert in hir totorn[e] weede,  
 And kneuh also be contenau[n]ce & cheer,  
 How she off hire took but litil heede,  
 Lik as she hadde to hir no maner neede, —  
 The which[e] thynges conceyued and Iseyn,  
 To Pouerte she ansuerde thus ageyn:

232 Fortune saw  
 that Glad  
 Poverty had  
 little respect  
 for her and  
 answered:

¶ 'Mi scornful\* lauhthe pley[n]li was for the,  
 Whan I the sauh so megre, pale and leene,  
 Nakid and cold, in gret aduersite,  
 Scabbid, scuruy, scallid and oncleene  
 On bak and body, as it is weel seene.  
 Many a beeste walke in ther pasture,  
 Which day be day off newe thou doost recure.

236

"I laughed  
 when I saw  
 240 you so thin  
 and pale and  
 cold, so scurv  
 and unclean.  
 You dwell in  
 the fields

244

211. She] Scho R.  
 228. neueradeel] not adeel J, not a dele P.  
 234. know R.  
 236. hadde] om. R.  
 239. scornful] soruhful B.  
 243. and] om. R.

and have nothing to wrap your head in but a piece of old matting. Children run when they see you, and many a dog has gnawed on your staff.

Hauyng nothyng to wrappyn in thyn hed [p. 148]  
 Sauff a brod hat, rent out off nattis olde,  
 Ful often hungri for defaute off bred, 248  
 Slepyn on straw[e] in the frostis colde.  
 And wher thou comest, as men may weel beholde,  
 For feer off the, childre them withdrawe,  
 And many a dogge hath on thi staff ignawe. 252

"You are odious to all men; everybody flees your presence."

To alle estatis thou art most odious,  
 Men with the will ha[ue] no daliaunce,  
 Thi felaship is so contrarious,  
 Wher thou abidest ther may be no plesaunce. 256  
 Folk hate so dedli thi froward aqeyntaunce,  
 That fynali, I dar conclude off the,  
 Wher-euer thou comest thi felaship men fle!"

When Glad Poverty saw how rude Fortune was to her, she replied:

Whan Glad Pouert gan pleynli vndirstonde 260  
 These rebukes rehersed off Fortune,  
 The rud[e] resouns that she took on honde,  
 Which frowardli to hire she dede entune,  
 As Pouert were a refus in comune, 264  
 Bi the repreuis that Fortune on hir laide;  
 For which Pouert replied ageyn & saide:

"Fortune, be well certain that I have renounced your favour of my own free will. I would rather be poor and happy than possess great wealth and have no peace of mind."

¶ 'Fortune,' quod she, 'touchyng this debat,  
 Which off malice thou doost ageyn me take, 268  
 Be weel certeyn, touchyng my poore estat,  
 I off fre will thi fauour ha[ue] forsake.  
 And thouh folk seyn thou maist men riche make,  
 Yit I ha[ue] leuere be poore with gladnesse, 272  
 Than with trouble possede gret richesse.

"Although you make a fine appearance and look fat and well fed"

For thouh thou seeme benygne & debonaire  
 Bi a maner countirfet apparence,  
 Fat & weel fed, with rounde chekis faire, 276  
 With many colours off trouthe as in pretence,  
 As ther off feith wer werrai existence, —  
 But vnder all thi floures off fressshnesse  
 The serpent glidith, off chaung & doubilnesse. 280

and wear purple clothes and have many servants and jewels, nevertheless I am quite ready to fight you."

And thouh thi clothyng be of purpil hewe,  
 With gret awaityng off many chaumbereris,  
 Off gold & perle ech dai chaunges newe,  
 Clothes off gold & sondry fressh atiris, 284  
 And in thyn houshold ful many officeris, —

Yit I dar weel putte in iupartie,  
With the to plete and holde chaumpartie.'

Thus Glad Pouert gan wexen inportune,  
Off cheer contraire, off look & off language,  
Ageyn this ladi which callid is Fortune,  
That off disdeyn she fill into a rage:  
¶ 'Behold,' quod she, 'off Pouert the corage,  
In wrechidnesse standyng disconsolat,  
How ageyn me she is now obstynat!

288 Fortune then  
lost her temper  
and said:  
"Behold the  
presumption of  
this wretched  
creature, she  
cannot

292

She cannat see, how she stant outraied,  
Fer from the fauour off my felicity,  
Yit off pride she is nat disamaied,  
Nor\* list nat bowwe for tobeie me,  
Thouh she be cast in mendicite,  
Ferthest a-bak, I do you weel assure,  
In myscheff set off any creature.

see how misera-  
ble she is with-  
out my favour,  
and yet she is  
full of pride!

296

300

But treuli, Pouert, for al thi truaundise,  
Maugre thi pride and thi gret outrage,  
I shal the pun[y]she in ful cruel wise,  
To make the loute vnder my seruage.  
Which resemblist a dedli pale ymage,  
That were off newe rise out off his graue,  
And yit off pride darst ageyn me raue.'

"Truly, Poverty,  
for all your  
outrageous con-  
ceit, I'll punish  
you and make  
you bow down  
in my service.  
You look as if  
you had just  
risen from the  
grave!"

304

308

But whan Fortune hadde these woordis said,  
Glad Pouert gan falle in gret gladnesse,  
And ageyn Fortune with a sodeyn braid,  
She gan hir conceit out shewe & expresse:  
¶ 'Fortune,' quod she, 'thouh thou be a goddesse  
Callid off foolis, yit lerne this off me,  
From thi seruage I stonde at liberte.

On hearing this  
Glad Poverty re-  
joiced and said:  
"Fortune, if  
fools call you a  
goddess, I, at  
any rate, am free  
from your sub-  
jection; and  
since we are  
going to fight,  
it is comforting  
to know that  
you have no  
firmness of  
heart."

312

316

But yiff I shal algatis haue a-doo  
With the in armis, most cruel & vengable,  
Touchyng the quarel that is atwen vs too,  
Ther is o thyng to me riht comfortable,  
That thi corage is flekeryng & onstable;  
And wher an herte is in hymself deuyded,  
Victorie in armys for hym is nat prouyded.

320

288. Importune R, H. 289. contrary H.

298. Nor] Nar B—for] om. H.

303. gret] om. J.

318. that] which H—atwen] tween J.

"I won't flatter you, although flattery is appropriate to your kind: I have freely forsaken worldly wealth,  
 Me list[e] nouthre flatre the nor fage,  
 Nor the tenoynte be adulacioun, 324  
 Thouh flat[e]rie & feyned fals language  
 Approprid be to thi condicioun;  
 And in despit off thi presumpcioun,  
 I ha[ue] forsake off my fre volunte 328  
 All the tresours off worldli vanite.

and if once your servant, I am now emancipated from your power.  
 Whilom I was, as thou hast deuised, [p. 149]  
 Seruant to the, and onto thi tresours;  
 But fro thi daunger now that I am fraunchised, 332  
 Sekyng off the nouthre helpe nor socours,  
 Manace kynges & myhti emperours:  
 For Glad Pouert, late nouthre soone,  
 With thi richessis hath nothyng to doone. 336

"You may hold worldly princes and rich merchants in subjection, Glad Poverty has wholly escaped your lure.  
 For thouh thou haue enbracid in thi cheyne  
 Worldli pryncis & goodes transitorie,\*  
 And riche marchantis vndir thi demeyne,  
 Yeuest to knythod conquest and victorie,\* 340  
 The fadyng palme off laude & veynglorie,\* —  
 But whan echon thi fauour han recurid,  
 Than is Glad Pouert fre fro thi lure assurid.

"All your servants stand in fear of your deceit; Glad Poverty alone is free.  
 All thi seruantis standen vnder dreede, 344  
 Quakyng for feer[e] off thi doubilnesse;  
 For nouthre wisdam, force nor manheede,  
 Fredam, bounte, loue nor ientillesse  
 Mai in thi fauour ha[ue] no sekirnesse; 348  
 Thei be so possid with wyndis in thi barge,  
 Wher-as Glad Pouert goth freli at his large.

"Desiring nothing, I am not afraid of your menaces.  
 Thi manacyng doth me no duresse,  
 Which worldli pryncis dredyn euerichon. 352  
 Thei may weel quake for losse off gret richesse;  
 But I, Glad Pouert, theroff desire non,  
 As flowe & ebbe al worldli thyng mut gon;  
 For afftir flodis off Fortunys tyde, 356  
 The ebbe folweth, & will no man abide.

324. tonoynte R.

331. onto] to R.

338. transitoires B, R, J, transytoryes H 5, transitories P.

340. victoires B, R, J, victories P, victoryes H 5.

341. veyngloires B, R, J, vainglories P, veynglories H 5.

347. gentillesse R, H, gentlenes P. 348. Mai] Man R.

349. wynde R.

355. worldli] erthly H.



Flowe and ebbe be to me bothe aliche;  
 I dreede nothyng thi mutabilite,  
 Mak whom thou list[e] outhr poore or riche;  
 For I nothyng will requere off the,  
 Nouthr lordshepe nor gret prosperite:  
 For with thi giffes who that hath to doone,  
 Off chaunges braideth offter than the moone.

360 "Flow and ebb  
 of fortune are  
 alike to me.  
 Do as you will  
 with others; I  
 ask nothing of  
 you.

Out off pouert cam first these emperours  
 That were in Rome crownyd with laurer;  
 Fredam & largesse made hem first victours,  
 Causyng ther fame to shyne briht and cleer,  
 Till couetise brouht hem in daunger,  
 Whan thei off foli, in ther most excellence,  
 To thi doubilnesse dede reuerence.

364 "The emperors  
 of Rome first  
 arose out of  
 poverty, nor did  
 they fall until  
 they became  
 covetous and  
 worshiped you.

For whan fredam a pryncce doth forsake,  
 And couetise put awei largesse,  
 And streihtnesse is into houshold take,  
 And negardship exilith ientillesse,  
 Than is withdrawe from ther hih noblesse  
 The peeplis herte; and, pleyntli to deuise,  
 Off ther seruauantis farweel al good seruise.

372 "When a  
 prince becomes  
 avaricious he  
 loses the love of  
 his people;

Al such sodeyn chaungis in comune  
 In this world vsid now fro day to day,  
 Echon thei come be fraude off fals Fortune;  
 Experience hath put it at assay,  
 Loue, trouthe & feith be gon [so] ferr away.  
 And yiff that trust with pryncis wil nat tarie,  
 Litol merueile thouth the peeple varie.

376 "When a  
 prince becomes  
 avaricious he  
 loses the love of  
 his people;  
  
 380 and sudden  
 changes are to be  
 expected when  
 the honour of  
 princes has de-  
 parted.

For thoruh thi chaungis off fraudulent fairnesse,  
 Ther is now vsid in eueri region  
 Glad cheer out shewed with couert doubilnesse,  
 Vnder the courtyn off symulacioun.

384  
  
 388 "Owing to you,  
 people every-  
 where dissem-  
 ble; there is no  
 surety except  
 in Glad Poverty.

So secre now is adulacioun,  
 That in this world may be no sur[e]te,  
 But yiff it reste in Glad Pouerte.

392  
  
 396 "I have no fear  
 of your  
 froward incon-  
 stancy:  
 my poor estate  
 is quite safe  
 from your  
 vicissitudes."

Yit off thi perelous froward variaunce  
 I sette no stor, treuli as for me;  
 For al thi frenship concludeth with myschaunce,  
 With sodeyn myscheeff off mutabilite,  
 Which yeueth me herte to haue a-do with the:

358. be] om. R. 375. gentliness H.  
 383. so] om. J, R. 390. secret H. 397. me] my R.



For suffisaunce in my poore estaat  
Shal to thi chaunges seyn sodenli chekmaat.'

When she heard  
this Fortune  
was furious.  
"Poverty" she  
said, "if I did  
not show you  
my power men  
would think but  
little of me."

Fortune almost with anger disespiered, 400  
Off these woordis took ful gret greuaunce.  
¶ 'Pouert,' quod she, 'which maist nat been apeired!  
But I now shewe ageyn the my puissaunce,  
Men wolde litil accounte my substaunce, 404  
O myhti Pouert! O stronge Hercules!  
Which ageyn[s] me putttest thi-silff in pres!

"Do you  
suppose  
that you can  
overcome me, O  
strong Hercules?  
I, who am called  
Princess of  
Conquest and  
Arms!"

Supposest thou it sholde the auaile,  
Outher be force or be hardynesse 408  
To haue a-do with me in bataile,  
Which am off conquest & off hih prowesse  
In armys callid ladi and pryncesse?  
For ther is non so myhti conquerour, 412  
That may preuaile withoute my fauour.'

Poverty replied:  
"Although I  
have neither  
weapons nor  
armour, let us  
see if you dare  
wrestle with me,"

¶ Off these woordis Pouert nothyng afferd, [p. 150]  
Ansuerde ageyn, thus pleynli in sentence:  
'Thouh heer I ne\* haue spere, sheeld nor suerd, 416  
Nor chosen armour to stonden at diffence,  
Pollex nor dagger to make resistence,  
But bare and naked, anon it shal be seyn,  
Wher thou with me darst wrastlen on this pleyn. 420

under the con-  
dition that  
neither of us  
shall withdraw,  
and that the  
victor may bind  
the other to  
obey his will."

Which shal be doon vnder condicioun  
That non off vs shal hymself withdrawe,  
But stille abide off entencioun,  
Till he that venquysse ordeyned hath a lawe, 424  
Such as hym likith, ageyn[e]s his felawe.  
The which[e] lawe shal nat be delaied  
To be acomplishid on hym that is outraied.'

At this Fortune  
began to smile:  
"Who shall be  
judge between  
us?"

Off whos woordes Fortune ageyn gan smyle, 428  
That Pouert proffred so proudli to assaile.  
And vpon this she stynte a litil while,  
And to Pouert she putte this opposaile:  
¶ 'Who shal,' quod she, 'be iuge off this bataile, 432  
Or yeue a doom iustli atwen vs tweyne  
Off this quarell which we shal darreyne?

416. heer I ne] I heer B, R, P. 417. stonde in at R.  
420. Wher] Wheper H — on] in R.  
424. venquysshith H — haue H.  
434. Off] on H, R 3.

I axe also a-nother questioun  
 Touchyng thi profre off furious outrage:  
 Wher-as thou putttest a condicioun  
 And a lawe with ful proud language, —  
 Wher shaltow fynden pleggis or hostage  
 To keepe the promys which thou doost ordeyne, 440  
 Theroff tabide the guerdoun or the peyne?

436 "And if I win,  
 where will you  
 find surety to  
 keep your  
 promise?"

I meene as thus: yiff ther be set a lawe  
 Atween vs too or a condicioun  
 Be sur[e]te, which may nat be withdrawe,  
 As vnder bond or obligacioun;  
 But there is nouthur lawe nor resoun  
 May bynde a beggere, yiff it be weel souht,  
 Whan it is preued that he hath riht nouht. 448

444 "If a condition  
 be set between  
 us, how can  
 a beggar, who  
 has nothing, be  
 bound to keep  
 it?"

Thi sect off pouert hath a proteccioun  
 From all statutis to gon at liberte,  
 And from al lawe a pleyn exempcioun:  
 Than folweth it, yiff thou bounde the  
 To any lawe that may contreuיד be,  
 It wer fraude, pleynli to endite,  
 Which hast riht nouht thi parti to aquite.

452 "Your sect of  
 Poverty goes  
 free of all law; it  
 would be a  
 fraud for you  
 to bind your-  
 self without  
 having any  
 security."

Thou art so feeble, yiff it cam therto,  
 That thou were brouht onto vttraunce,  
 For noun power, whan al that wer do,  
 Thou sholdist faile to make thi fynauce,  
 Bothe destitut off good and off substaunce;  
 And sithe no lawe thi persone may coarte,  
 It wer foli with suchon to iupart.

456 "And as you are  
 destitute, and  
 exempt from  
 all penalties, it  
 were folly to  
 have ado with  
 you."

Yiff I wolde compulse the to wrak,  
 Taxe off the the tresour off kyng Darie,  
 On that parti thou stondest ferr abak,  
 Mi paiement so longe sholde tarie,  
 Indigence wolde make the to varie.  
 And yiff I wolde thi persone eek compare  
 To Alisandre, — thi sides been ful bare!

464 "I should have  
 to wait a long  
 time before I  
 got anything out  
 of you!"

And fynali thou stondest in such caas  
 Off miserie, wrechidnesse and neede,  
 That thou myhttest off resoun seyn\* allas,  
 Bothe forsake off frenshiپe & kenreede,  
 And ther is non dar plegge the for dreede:

468

472 "Miserable and  
 without friends  
 or kin, no one  
 would stand  
 surety for  
 you; yet, like a  
 vainglorious  
 fool, you expect  
 to win."

449. Thi] The P — sect] feet R.

472. seyn] syngen B, syng R, synge J, sing P, say R 3.

473. &] & of H.

Yit lik a fool supprid with veynglorie,  
Hapest off me to wynne the victorie.' 476

Said Glad Poverty, "I have no doubt whatever that I shall win. Nor do I ask any pledge of you, except that you will promise to fight to a finish.

¶ Quod Glad Pouert, 'I doute neueradeel  
That the victorie\* shal passen on my side.  
Plegge & hostages, lat hem go farweel!  
I axe no mor off al thi grete pride, 480  
But to the eende that thou wilt abide.  
Plegge thi feith, al-be that sum men\* seith,  
To truste in Fortune ther is ful litil feith.

"And as I have no security to offer except my body, you can take that and keep it in prison for ever if you have the victory.

And for my part, in this hih emprise, 484  
Sithe I ha[ue] pleggis nouter on nor tweyne,  
Mor sur hostage can I nat deuise,  
But yiff so be the victorie\* thou atteyne,  
Than yelde my bodi bounden in a cheyne, 488  
Perpetueli, lik the condicioun,  
With the tabide fettrid in prisoun.'

Fortune laughed more than ever. "It is contrary to nature for a beggar to have such a bold heart!

Than Fortune louh mor than she dede afforn,  
Whan she sauh Pouert so presumptuous; 492  
In hir\* arrai al ruggid and totorn,  
And hadde nouter rente, lond nor hous.  
'It is,' quod she, 'a thyng contrarious  
Onto nature, who that can aduerte, 496  
To a beggere to haue a sturdi herte.

"And if I conquer you, of what use would it be to me to keep your empty belly full in prison?

And yiff that I the venquissid in bataile, [p.151]  
It were to me no worshepe nor auantage,—  
What sholde thi bodi onto me auaille, 500  
The tenprisowne streihtli in a cage?  
It sholde been a charge and a costage,  
Thyn empti wombe ech day to fulfill,  
Yiff thou myhtest haue\* vitaille at thi will! 504

"If I were to lead you in triumph behind my chariot, men would say, 'Look at that fool, who has conquered a beggar!'

And yiff I wolde my-silff to magnefe,  
Tokne off tryumphe afftir my char the leede,  
Men wolde deeme it a maner moquerie,  
And seyn in scorn: 'tak off that fool good heede, 508  
How he a beggere hath ouercome in deede,  
Fauht with hym for to encrece his name,  
Which conquest turneth to his disclandre & shame!'

478. victoire B. 482. summen B.

483. litil] om. R.

487. victoire B. 493. hir] his B, R, J — ruggid] ragged  
R 3, H 5, to ragged P, rogged R.

504. han B.

511. sclandre & diffame R 3.

Yit whan I haue brouht the to vttraunce,  
 Mi power shewed and my grete myht,  
 And thyn outrage oppressid bi vengauce, —  
 Afftir al this, as it is skile and riht,  
 It shal be kouth in eueri manys siht,  
 Out declarid the gret[e] difference  
 Twen thi feblesse\* & my gret excellence.

512 "At any rate,  
 after I have  
 beaten you  
 everybody will  
 see the great  
 difference be-  
 tween us, and  
 then I'll let  
 516 Orcus tear you  
 in pieces to shew  
 my power."

Than to represe thi surquedie attonys,  
 Cruel Orchus, the teidogge infernall,  
 Shal reende thi skyn assonder fro thi bonys,  
 To shewe my power, which is imperiall,  
 And to declare in especiall,  
 Pouert recleymed onto Pridis lure,  
 With me to plete may no while endure.'

520

524

And sodenli, or Glad Pouert took heed,  
 Fortune proudli first began tassaile;  
 And onwarli hent hire bi the hed,  
 Demyng off pride, that she may nat faile  
 Thoruh hir power to venquysshe this bataile.  
 But it may falle a dwery in his riht  
 Toutraie a geaunt, for al his grete myht.

528

532

With that,  
 Fortune sud-  
 denly seized  
 Glad Poverty by  
 the head,

God taketh non heed to power nor to strengthe,  
 To hih estaat[e] nor to hih noblesse,  
 To squar[e] lemys, forged on breede or lengthe,  
 But to quarelis groundid on rihtwisnesse;  
 For out off wrong may growe no prowesse.  
 For wher that trouthe holdeth chaumpartie,  
 God will his cause be grace magnefie.

536

thinking it  
 would be easy to  
 overcome her.  
 But God always  
 defends the  
 right,

Wherfor Pouert, strong in hir entent,  
 Liht and delyu[e]re, auoid off al fatnesse,  
 Riht weel brethed, & nothyng corpulent,  
 Smal off dieete surfetis to represe,  
 Ageyn Fortune proudli gan hir dresse,  
 And with an ougli, sterne cruel face,  
 Gan in armys hir proudli to embrace.

540

544

and Poverty,  
 thin and active,  
 with an ugly  
 expression on  
 her face,

518. febilnesse B, feebilnesse H, feblenesse R.

520. tei dogge R, Teydogge H, tidogge J, tye dogge P, tye-  
 dogges R 3.

528. hent] tooke H. 531. dwery] dowri R.

539. God] Gog (*blunder*) R. 543. Dietis H.

545. with] *om.* R.

546. embrace R, H.



grasped Fortune  
around her  
corpulent, short-  
breathed body,

Pouert was scendre & myhte weel endure;  
 Fortune was round[e], short off wynd and breth. 548  
 And wombes grete oppressid with armure,  
 For lak off wynd the grete stuff hem sleth;  
 And many a man bryngeth to his deth:  
 For ouermekil off any maner thyng 552  
 Hath many on brouht to his ondoynge.

(for it is much  
better to be  
neither too fat  
nor too lean, and  
sufficiency is  
better than  
superfluity)

A mene is best, with good[e] gouernaunce;  
 To mekil is nouht, nor ouer-gret plente:  
 Gretter richesse is founde in suffisaunce 556  
 Than in the flodis off superfluyte.  
 And who is content in his pouerte  
 And gruchchith nat, for bittir nor for soote,  
 What-euer he be, hath Fortune vndir foote, 560

and lifted her up  
in the air,

Coueitise put hym in no dispeir, —  
 Wherfor Pouert, off herte glad and liht,  
 Leffte Fortune ful hi up in the heir,  
 And hir constreyned off verai force & myht. 564  
 For Glad Pouert off custum and off riht,  
 Whan any trouble ageyn hir doth begynne,  
 Ay off Fortune the laurer she doth wyne.

and, throwing  
her down, gave  
her such a blow  
over the heart  
with her sharp  
knee,

¶ Maugre Fortune, in the hair alofte 568  
 Constreyned she was be Wilful Pouerte,  
 That to the erthe hir fal was ful onsoffte:  
 For off Pouert the bony sharp[e] kne,  
 Scendre and long & leene vpon to see, 572  
 Hitte Fortune with so gret a myht  
 Ageyn the herte, she myht nat stande vpriht:

that she could  
not rise.  
(Poverty in con-  
tentment always  
holds Fortune in  
subjection;

To signefie that Pouert with gladnesse,  
 Which is content with smal possessioun 576  
 And geueth no fors off tresour nor richesse,  
 Hath ouer Fortune the dominacioun,  
 And kepith hir euer vnder subieccioun,  
 Wher worldli folk, with ther riche apparaile, 580  
 Lyue euer in dreed Fortune wolde faile.

poor men can  
sing before  
thieves; it is the  
rich man who is  
afraid.)

The poore man affor the theeff doth syng [p. 152]  
 Vnder the wodis with fresh notis shrille;  
 The riche man, ful feerful off robbynge, 584

553. ondoynge] endyng R, R 3.

568. alofte] of lotte R. 570. hir] his R.

583. woode H.



Quakyng for dreed[e], rideth foorth ful stille.  
 The poore at large goth wher hym list at wille,  
 Strongli fraunchised from al debat and striff;  
 The riche afferd alwei to lese his liff.

588

Thus Glad Pouert hath the palme Iwonne, —  
 Fortune outraied, for al hir doubilnesse.  
 Vpon whom Pouert in haste is ronne,  
 And streyned hir with so gret duresse,  
 Till she confessid & pleynli dede expresse  
 With feith & hand, in al hir gret[e] peyne,  
 Tabide what lawe Pouert list ordeyne.

592

Thus Glad  
 Poverty won  
 the battle and  
 punished  
 Fortune so  
 severely, that  
 she promised

And in haste afftir this disconfiture,  
 Fortune began to compleyne sore.  
 But Glad Pouert, which all thyng myhte endure,  
 Charged Fortune scornen hire no more.  
 For it was said[e] sithen go ful yore,  
 He that reioishith to scorne folk in veyn,  
 Whan he wer lothest shal scorned been ageyn.

596

to submit to  
 whatever  
 penalty Poverty  
 imposed on her.

600

‘Yit,’ quod Pouert, ‘thouh thou were despitous,  
 Woordis rehersyng which wer nat faire,  
 Straunge rebukis ful contrarious,  
 And repreuys many thousand paire,  
 Thou shalt me fynde ageynward debonaire:  
 For thouh a tunge be sclandrous & vengable,  
 To sclandre ageyn is nothyng comendable.

604

“You must not  
 scorn me any  
 more,” said  
 Poverty, “but  
 even if you  
 did, I would be  
 pleasant to you,  
 and, in con-  
 formity with our  
 agreement,

608

Thou must considre, touchyng our bataile  
 The ordynance and imposicioun,  
 That which off vs in conquest do preuaile  
 To brynge his felawe to subieccioun,  
 He shal obeie the statut off resoun,  
 And acomplisse, off verai due dette,  
 What lawe the victour list vpon hym sette.

612

616

For which thou shalt the said[e] lawe obeie,  
 With circumstaunces off the condicioun  
 Bi me ordeyned, and nothyng ageyn seie, —  
 Make no gruchchyng nor replicacioun.  
 Considred first the fals opynyoun  
 Off hem that seyn, al worldli auenture  
 Off good and badde abide vnder thi cure, —

620

you must do  
 what I com-  
 mand with-  
 out grumbling.

598. all thyng[e] om. R.

616. vpon] on H — to sette H.

"So, considering  
the erroneous  
idea that all  
worldly chance is  
under your  
control, I shall  
take Unhappy  
Adventure from  
your power.

Summe poetis and philisophres also  
Wolde in this caas make the a goddesse,  
Which be deceyued, I dar seyn, bothe too;  
And ther errour and foli to redresse,  
I shal withdrawe in verai sekirnesse  
Onhappi Auenture away fro thi power,  
That she no mor shal stonde in thi daunger.

624

628

"You will have  
to bind her to a  
stake where  
everybody can  
see her and  
know that only  
those who want  
her need take  
her with them.

This lawe off newe vpon the I make,  
That first thou shalt, al open in sum pleyn,  
Euel Auenture bynden to a stake,  
Or to sum peler wher she mai be seyn,  
To shewe exauple to folkis in certeyn,  
That no man shal loosne hire nor discharge,  
But such as list with hire to gon at large.

632

636

"And you shall  
harm no men  
but the fools  
who trust in  
you."

Heeroff to make a declaracioun,  
Touchyng thi myht off Euel Auenture,  
Thou shalt forgon thi dominacioun  
To hyndre or harme any creature,  
But onli foolis, which in thi myht assure.  
Thei off ther foli may feelee gret damage,  
Nat off thi power, but off ther owne outrage.'

640

644

Such wilful  
wretches who  
unbind Unhappy  
Adventure and  
call her a  
goddess

For thilke foolis, which that list onbynde  
This wrechche callid Onhappi Auenture,  
Off witt & resoun thei make hemseluene blynde,  
Lich as the world stood in Fortunys cure,  
As thouth she myhte assure hem & onsure,  
And hem dispose to welthe or wrechchidnesse, —  
In ther errour hir callyng a goddesse!

648

are blind  
to God's  
having given us  
free choice of  
good and evil.

Such wilful wrechchis that hemsilff betake  
To putte ther fredam in hir subieccioun,  
Off God aboute the power thei forsake,  
And hem submitte, ageyn[e]s al resoun,  
Vnder Fortunis transmutacioun,  
Ther liberte ful falsli for to thrall,  
Namli whan thei a goddesse list hir call.

652

656

With a dirk myst off variacioun  
Fortune hath cloudid ther cleer natural liht,  
And ouershadwed ther discrecioun,  
That thei be blent in ther inward siht  
For to conside and to beholde ariht,

660

650. dispoise R. 661. And] And hath R.

How God aboue put vnder mannys cure 664  
Fre chois off good, his resoun to assure.

The Lord enlumyned off his bounteuos  
largesse [p. 153] 664  
With mynde and witt his memoriall,  
Toward al vertu his steppis for to dresse,  
Endued his resoun for to be naturall,  
Off frowardnesse till he wex bestiall,  
To bynde hymself contrariousli in deede  
To serue Fortune, atwixen hope and dreede. 672

Thus bestiall folk made hire a goddesse,  
Falsli wenyng she myhte hem most auaille  
With hir plentes off habundant richesse;  
And summe demen in ther supposale, 676  
With onwar chaung she dar the grete assaile,  
Whos trust[e] alwei medlid is with trouble,  
And hir plesaunce includith menyng double.

And summe afferme that she mai auaunce 680  
Conquestis grete and disconfitures,  
And how [it] lith also in hir puissaunce  
To forthre & hyndre all maner creatures,  
And calle hir prynesse off fatal auentures, 684  
The riche tenhaunce be roial appaile,  
And be disdeyn to hyndre the poraile.

Whan she maketh most fulsumli hir profres,  
Hir blaundisshyng is farsid with falsheed; 688  
Whan hir richessis be stuffid up in coffres,  
Thei been ay shet vnder a lok off dreed.  
Wherefore, ye riche, off o thyng takith heed,  
As your gadryng cam in with plesaunce, 692  
Riht so your losse departeth with myschaunce.

Your gredi thrust tresour to multeplie  
Causith an etik off nounsuffisaunce,  
In you engendryng a fals ydropisie,  
With a sharp hunger off worldli habundaunce, 696  
Makyng off you a maner resemblaunce

God gave man  
Reason as a  
guide for his  
footsteps  
towards virtue;  
but he became  
irrational out  
of froward-  
ness, and bound  
himself to For-  
tuna,

making her a  
goddess in the  
false belief that  
she could help  
him.

Some people  
claim that she  
can give victory  
and further or  
hinder all  
creatures.

When she  
promises most,  
her flattery is  
stuffed with lies;  
when her wealth  
is piled up in  
chests, they are  
closed with a  
lock of dread.

Therefore, you  
rich, fearing loss,  
your greed only  
engenders a  
fever for more  
wealth, and you  
are very much  
like Tantalus.

666. his] om. P — illumyned R.

669. is transposed with 670 and 671, and blunder indicated by letters a and b R. 672. is misplaced at foot of column R.

678. is medlid H. 682. how] om. R.

684. fatal] al maner R. 691. ye] the R.

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ALLAHABAD

With Tantalus, — whan ye deppest synke,  
Than is your nature most thrustleuh for to drynke. 700

Whoever climbs  
highest on  
Fortuna's wheel  
falls when he  
least expects it;  
but the poor are  
exempt from  
such changes.

Who clymbeth hiest on Fortunys wheel  
And sodenli to richesse\* doth ascende,  
An onwar turn, afforn seyn neueradeel,  
Whan he leest wenyth makith hym descende. 704  
Fro such chaungis, who may hymselff defende,  
But thei that be with Pouert nat dismaied,  
And can with litil holde hemsilff appaied."

[How kyng hostilius worshipping fals goddis/ was  
consumpt with firy Levene.]<sup>1</sup>

While  
Bochas was  
thinking over  
this matter,  
princes who were  
once famous in  
Italy came to  
him bewailing  
their fall.

AND whil Bochas gan muse in this mateer, 708  
Considred first al worldli thyng mut faile,  
With wepyng eien [to hym] ther dede appeer  
Pryncis that whilom wer famous in Itaille,  
Which gan ther fall ful pitousli bewaile: 712  
For mor contrarie\* was ther fallyng lowe,  
That thei toforn hadde [of] no myscheeff knowe.

Adversity is  
harder for a  
prince to bear  
than a poor  
wretch who has  
always lived in  
discomfort.

For mor vnkouth is thilke aduersite,  
Namli to pryncis, whan it is sodeyne, 716  
Which euer ha lyued in prosperite,  
Hauyng on Fortune no mater to compleyne,  
Than off a wrechche, that lyueth ay in peyne, —  
Off custom causeth, conceyued the sentence, 720  
Off ioie and sorwe a ful gret difference.

The remem-  
brance of past  
joy trebles their  
pain;

Off ioie passid the newe remembraunce,  
Whan folk be falle from ther felicite,  
In treble wise it doth hem gret greuaunce; 724  
Thonwar turn from ther tranquillite,  
Thonsur trust and mutabilite  
In worldli power, which that thei ha[ue] founde,  
Onto ther hertis yeueth a greuous wounde. 728

but a man who  
has always  
known want is  
proof against  
misfortune.

But a wrechche, which in wrechchidnesse  
Hath euer lyued, and neuer was partable  
Off no weelfare nor off welfulnesse,

700. your nature is R — for] *om.* R.

702. riches B, richness J.

708. in] on H — mateer] maner R.

710. to hym] *om.* J, R. 713. contraire B. 714. of] *om.* J, R.

731. 2nd off] of no H — wealthfulness P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 63 recto.



Nor neuer fo[u]nd[e] Fortune fauourable, —  
His sorwe, his myscheeff been so custumable,  
That off his peynys long contynuaunce  
Doth to his greuys a maner allegaunce.

732

But to pryncis, which sat so hih aloffte,  
A sodeyn fall is most contrarious,  
And ther descendyng weel the more onsoffte,  
In ther tryumphes that thei wer glorious.  
Record I take off kyng Hostilius,  
Which in Rome from his roial stalle,  
Whan he sat crownyd, most sodenli is falle.

736 That princes  
suffer greatly is  
shewn by the  
fall of King  
Hostilius of  
Rome,

740

It is remembrid off old and nat off newe,  
Off al Rome that he was lord and sire;  
The firste off kynges that wered purpil hewe,  
And off that cite gouerned the empire,  
Hadde off Fortune al that hym list desire,  
Till that he fill, in all his regalie,  
Into a froward dedli maladie.

the first king  
who wore  
purple, and  
744 who had every-  
thing he desired  
until he became  
ill.

748

And off his peynes to fynden allegaunce,  
To the temples he wente on pilgrymage,  
His offryng made with deuout obeisaunce,  
Wherbi sumdeel his peynes gan asswage;  
And when he was restored off corage,  
Felt hymself[e] that he dede amende,  
To comoun proffit ageyn he gan entende.

[p. 154] He grew better  
after he had  
made a devout  
pilgrimage to  
752 the temples of  
his country,

756

Vpon Thalbanys, regnyng in his glorie,\*  
To gret auail off Rome the cite,  
Thoruh his knyhtod he hadde a gret victorie,  
Afftir the which, be ful gret cruelte,  
He beraffte hem fraunchise and liberte,  
And made hem afftir, thoruh his hih renoun,  
To been to Rome vnder subieccioun.

and was  
victorious over  
the Albans.

760

Afftir this conquest, the stori doth deuyse,  
In his noblesse ful staatli and roial,  
He gan make a riche sacrifice  
To queeme and pleser for a memorial,  
Affter the rihtes cerymonyal,

764 After this  
victory he made  
a rich sacrifice  
to Jupiter,

768

746. the empire] he thempire R.

757. Talbanys R — gloire B.

759. victoire B.

764. this] his R.



To Iubiter, be ful gret reuerence,  
Aforne his auteres with fires & encence.

but unfortunately  
did something  
wrong, and so  
enraged the gods  
that they con-  
sumed him with  
lightning.

But for that he in his inward entent,  
Be circumstaunces off his oblacioun, 772  
Was rechles founde and also negligent,  
Be sum froward fals affecciou,   
The goddis kauhte an indignacioun;  
And sodenli descendyng from the heuene, 776  
He was consumpt with a firi leuene, —

His false gods,  
Jupiter, Saturn  
and Venus,  
were unable to  
help him. All  
Christians should  
defy such  
niffraff

His false goddis myhte hym nat auaille,  
Iubiter, Saturnus nor Venus.  
Lat al *Christene* defie such rascaile; 780  
For to our feith thei be contrarious.  
And among goddis, a thyng most outraious,  
Ys, whan that pryncis, blent in ther folie,  
List ertheli thynges falsli deifie. 784

and never  
worship  
earthly things,  
for it is odious  
to God.

For onto God is hatful and odible  
A withdrawyng off his reuerence,  
To magnefie thynges corruptible  
With ondue honour, be fals concupiscence. 788  
Wherfor, ye Pryncis, beth war, off hih prudence,  
List God onwarli pun[y]she your noblesse,  
Maak you in erthe no fals god nor goddesse.

[How Anchus kyng of Rome was moordred by  
Lucynyo, bi thassent of his wiff.]<sup>1</sup>

Anchus Marcius  
succeeded to  
Hostilius, and  
was murdered  
with the consent  
of his wife,

**T**HYNKITH on Anchus, kyng off Rome toun, 792  
Which was so noble shynyng in his glorie,  
Wered a crowne, ful famous off renoun,  
Next Hostilius, as put is in memorie,  
Wan the palme off many gret victorie; 796  
But for al that, with a ful sharp[e] knyff  
He moordred was bassentyng off his wyff.

whom he greatly  
loved, blind to  
her falsenes;  
for she coveted  
his riches.

He loued hir best aboue ech cr  ature,  
Considred nat hir flatrie nor falsnesse, 800  
Hir double menyng vnder couerture  
Falsli blent this pryncis worthypesse.  
To robbe and reue hym off his gret richesse

770] Afore his auctirs *with* fiere & ensence R.

777. firi] fiere R.

783. Ys] Ye R. 785. is] it is H. 788. be] *with* R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 63 verso.

Was hir labour, with countirfet plesaunce,  
In hir entent to brynge hym to myschaunce.

804

This Anchus hadde a gret affeccioun,  
Onto his goddis to make sacrificises,  
And to augmente the religioun

Ancus was a  
devout pagan  
and defeated the  
Latins

808

Off paganysme, maad in sundri wises.  
Thoruh his manhod and circumspect deuyses,  
Vpon Latynes, rebel to his cite,  
For comoun profit he made a gret arme.

812

Oon off ther cites, callid Politorie,  
He knyhtli wan, maugre al ther myht;  
And whan he hadde off hem ful victorie,  
He abod no lenger, but anon foorth ryht  
Made al the peeples, in eueri mannys siht,  
As prisoneris, this Romainn champioun,  
Be brouht aforn hym bounde into the toun.

and brought  
many of  
them prisoners  
to Rome.

816

Eek, as I fynde, this Anchus nolde cese,  
For comoun proffit in his affeccioun,  
Ther teritories taugmenten and encrese  
In all the cuntres abouten envirooun  
Toward the ryuer wher Tibre renneth doun;  
At which[e] place he leet[e] edefie  
A ful strong cite, which callid is Ostie.

820 He was always  
busy to increase  
the territories of  
Rome, and built  
Ostia.

824

But natwithstandyng al his worthynesse,  
He was de pryued, the story tellith so,  
Off his kyngdam and his gret richesse  
Bi a foreyn callid Lucynyo.  
His wiff Tarquild assentid was therto,  
Bi whos outrage and gredi couetise  
Anchus was moordred in ful cruel wise.

828 Nevertheless he  
was murdered  
by an alien  
named Lucinio.

832

[How Lucynyo that mordred Anchus was affir  
mordred.]<sup>1</sup>

**T**HUS fro the wheel of Fortune he is fall; [p. 155] Lucinio  
Lucynio in Rome is crownyd kyng,  
And the Romainys afftir dede hym call  
Tarquyn the olde, be record off writyng.

Lucinio  
obtained the  
crown  
through  
his fraud and  
eloquence

836

813. ther] the R — pylitorie R. 821. his] this R.

822. encrese] crese R. 824. wher] om. H.

830. Lucimyo H. 831. Tanquild R.

833. in ful cruel wise] as ye have herd devise H, R 3, H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 64 recto.

Which hath atteyned, be fraudulent werkyng,  
 And bi his subtil forged eloquence  
 Onto thestat off roial excellence.

840

and entertained  
 the people with  
 jousts and was  
 the first king to  
 institute  
 taverns.

He first ordeyned in his estat roial  
 Turneis, iustes in castell[s] and cites,  
 And other pleies callid marcial,  
 With many famous gret solempnites,  
 Sessiouns for statis and degrees.  
 This Tarquyn eek, was first that dede his peyne  
 In open stretis tauernys to ordeyne.

844

He was also the  
 first to wall  
 Rome and to  
 build towers for  
 defence. He  
 conquered the  
 Sabines and  
 married  
 Tanaquil.

Eek to preserue his cite out off doubte,  
 Yiff ther enmyes list them to assaile,  
 He was the first that wallid Rome aboute  
 With myhti tours, onlikli for to faile,  
 And hadde also many strong bataile  
 With the Sabyne in ther rebelloun,  
 And made hem subiect onto Rome toun.

848

But for he was assentid to depryue  
 Worthi Anchus from his estat roial,  
 And afftir that took Tarquyld [on]to wyue,  
 Which slouh hir lord be tresoun ful mortal,  
 God wolde off riht that he sholde haue a fal:  
 The Lord wil nat, which euery thyng may see,  
 Suffre moordre longe to be secre.

856

God would not  
 allow such a man  
 to prosper, so he  
 was slain by  
 two shepherds

For Lucynio, for his gret offence,  
 Touchyng the moordre off the kyng Anchus,  
 Islay[e]n was be sodeyn violence  
 Off too shepperdis, the stori tellith thus,  
 Which off entent[e] wer contrarious  
 Atwen hemsilff[e] be a feyned striff,  
 To fynde a weie to reue hym off his liff.

864

who came before  
 him on the  
 pretence of a  
 quarrel and then  
 fell on him with  
 an axe.

For whil the kyng sat in iugement  
 Upon ther quarel for to do iustise,  
 Ful sodenli, thei beyng off assent,  
 Fill vpon hym in ful cruel wise,  
 And with an ax, the story doth deuise,  
 Oon off hem, or any man took heed,  
 On too parties roff the kynges hed.

868

872

854. subiect] sogettis H.

857. tanquyld J, Tanaquil P, Tanquile H 5.

860. euery] euer R.

870. quarellis H.

This thyng was doon bi the procuryng  
 Off too childre, sonys to Anchus,  
 Which were exilid be fals compassyng  
 Off Lucinio, ageyn hem most irous, —  
 To hym ther presence was so odious.  
 But thei hem shoop, thouth thei were out off siht,  
 Ther fadres deth tauengen yiff thei myht.

876 This was done  
 by the in-  
 stigation of  
 Ancus'  
 children,  
 whom Lucinio  
 had exiled.

880

For off nature blood will vengid be,  
 To recompense the wrong off his kynreede,  
 In this chapitle, lik as ye may see,  
 Blood shad for blood: thus bothe dede bleede.  
 Be which exauple, lat pryncis taken heede,  
 How moordre doon for supplantacioun\*  
 Requereth vengauce for his fynal guerdoun.

884 Blood will be  
 avenged, as you  
 may see in this  
 chapter. Let  
 princes remem-  
 ber this.

888

[*Lenvoye.*]

**T**HIS tragedie be cleer inspeccioun  
 Openli declareth in substaunce,  
 How slauhtre of princis causith subuersioun  
 Off rewmys, cites put out off ordynaunce,  
 Off mortal werre long contynuaunce.  
 Blood be supplantyng\* shad off kynges tweyne,  
 Bexauple heer shewed, fals moordre to restreyne, 896

This tragedy  
 plainly declares  
 that the  
 slaughter of  
 892 princes causes  
 war and sub-  
 version and cries  
 always  
 vengeance.

The fyn declaryng off moordre & fals tresoun:  
 The deede horrible crieth ay vengauce  
 To God aboue to caste his eien doun,  
 To punshe this synne thöruh his myhti puissaunce; 900  
 For it is mooder off myscheeff & myschaunce.  
 Wherfor, ye Pryncis, doth sum lawe ordeyne,  
 Withynne your boundis thre vices to restreyne:

The vice off sclaunder, moordre and poison.  
 Wher-euer these thre hauen aqueyntaunce,  
 Thei brynge in sorwe and desolacioun,  
 Put at a preeff be newe remembraunce  
 Off falsheed vsed vnder fair cuntenaunce.  
 Wherfor, ye Pryncis, doth your besi payne,  
 Withynne your boundis these vices to restreyne.

904 Wherefore,  
 Princes, see that  
 the evils of  
 slander, murder  
 and poison, and  
 the sorrow and  
 desolation they  
 bring are re-  
 908 strained in your  
 realms.

888. subplantacioun B.

895. subplantyng B.

900. thöruh] by H.



God defend  
England from  
slander, that  
slays good fame,  
and from murder  
and poison: no  
punishment is  
too severe for  
them.

God diffende this noble regioun  
With these thre vices to haue\* alliaunce: 912  
For sclaunder first deuoureth hih renoun,  
And sleth good fame thoruh fals dalliaunce.  
Harm doon, to late folweth repentaunce,  
Wherfor, ye Pryncis, doth a lawe ordeyne 916  
To punshe ther malice, fals tungenes to restreyne.

God hath off moordre abhominacioun, [p. 156]  
And fals poisoun doth to hym displeaunce;  
Ther is no peyen\* in comparisoun 920  
Condigne to moordre, peised in ballaunce.  
Wherfor, ye Pryncis, makith an ordynaunce,  
Withynne your boundis off sum dedli peyne  
Bi du[e] punshyng fals moordre to restreyne. 924

Princes, let  
death be the  
final reward of  
these vices.

O noble Pryncis, prouydeth off resoun  
Ageyn these vices to make purueiaunce,  
Off rigour sheweth due execucioun  
With al your labour & your hertli instaunce. 928  
Lat deth be guerdoun for ther fynal penaunce,  
To warne all othre, be constreynt off ther peyne,  
Fro these thre vices ther corages to restreyne.

[How for the offence don to Lucrece by Tarquyn  
was never aftir crowned kyng in Rome.]<sup>1</sup>

Tarquyn the Old  
and his family  
long dominated  
Rome, until the  
time of the Rape  
of Lucrece.  
Then the name  
of king came to  
an end.

**T**OUCHING this Tarquyn, of whom I now[e] 932  
tolde,  
As myn auctour maketh menciou[n],  
He callid was Tarquinius the olde,  
Which longe in Rome hadde dominacioun,  
Till his kynreede and generacioun, 936  
For thoffence doon onto Lucrece,  
Caused off kynges the name [for] to cese.

Old Tarquin's  
son was called  
Tarquin the  
Proud for his evil  
life.

For his sone, which afftir gan succeede,  
For his outrages and his extorsions, 940  
And for many a-nother cruel deede,

911. this] the R. 912. thre vices] regions R — haue]  
hauen B.

913-15 are replaced by 904-6 R. 917. ther] the R.

920. peyne B. 924. punishyng P.

932. I nowe] riht now I H.

933. There is a contraction sign for ur over the u in auctour B.

934. Tarquinius R. 936. Till] Al H. 937. onto] to H.

938. for] om. R, J, P — names P. 939. sone] sony R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 64 verso.



For his haatful vsurpaciouns,  
His froward liif and fals condiciouns,  
Among the peeple, bothe stille and loude,  
He callid was Tarquinius the proude.

944

Ful obstynat he was in his entent,  
Ambicious tacroche gret richesse,  
Till that Fortune wex inpacient  
Ageyn[e]s hym, in al his gret noblesse.  
Gan hir snares and hir crokes dresse,  
Thouhte she wolde, but he kept hym weel,  
Al sodenli cast hym from hir wheel.

952

A sone he hadde, ful vicious, as I fynde,  
To all vertu most contrarious —  
To be froward it cam to hym off kynde —  
And off nature proud and despitous,  
Ageyn the peeple fell and malicious,  
Nat louyd but drad; for tirannye off riht  
Is thyng most hatid in the peeplis siht.

956

This proude Tarquyn, the story is weel kouth,  
Ageyn Lucrece dede a gret outrage,  
Oppressid hir beute in his onbridled youth,  
Hir trouthe assailyn in a furious rage.  
For which his fader, he, and his lynage  
Exilid wern, and for this hatful thyng  
Ther was neuer afftir in Rome crownyd kyng.

960

who outraged  
Lucrece; and for  
that deed he and  
his father and  
all their kin  
were exiled.

Hir bodi corrupt, she cleene off herte & thouht,  
Be force assailed was hir innocence,  
Oppressid hir beute, but hir sperit nouht,  
Hir chaast[e] will dede non offence;  
But entred is into hir conscience  
A gret remors, for al hir wiifi trouthe,  
To slen hirsilff, which was to gret a route.

964

Although  
Lucrece's chaste  
will did no  
offence, she slew  
herself for re-  
morse;

And for that Bochas remembreth pitousli  
Hir dedli sorwe and lamentacioun,  
Writ hir compleynt in ordre ceriousli,  
Which that she made for hir oppressioun,  
I folwe muste and make mencion,  
Afftir myn auctour parcel rehersyng,  
Touchyng hir woordis said in hir deieng.

972

and as Bochas  
wrote her dying  
complaint, so  
must I,

976

980

945. Terquinius R.

948. Impacient R, H. 959. peeple R. 963. Hir] His R.

980. 1st hir] he H.

even if I have  
already told  
something  
of it by  
bidding of my  
lord.

Al-be-it so, be biddying off my lord,  
Rehersed haue in my translacioun  
Afftir Pierius heer and ther a woord  
Off a ful doolful declamacioun  
Be hym remembred off entencioun,  
For hir sake men myhte seen and rede  
What wifli trouthe was in hir womanheede.

984

I cannot follow  
John Bochas'  
eloquence, but I  
will give you the  
substance of his  
writing.

And Iohn Bochas list nat sette a-side,  
But that he wolde rehersen in sentence  
Hir woful compleynt, & therupon abide,  
Off wrongis doon onto hir innocence.  
And thouh I cannat folwe his eloquence,  
I shal sue the trouthe off rehersyng  
As in substaunce theeffect off his writyng.

988

992

The morning  
after the foul  
deed, Lucrece  
arose, and with a  
deadly pale face  
dressed herself  
in funereal black

¶ The morwe next afftir this foule deede,  
Lucrece vproos with a ful dedli cheer.  
Out off hir face gon was al the rede,  
And dirked wern hir heuenli eien cleer,  
Al clad in blak[e] afftir the maneer  
Off thilke folk which in especiall  
Ar wont to gon to feestis funerall.

996

1000

and said to her  
husband, father  
and assembled  
friends,

All hir freendis beyng in presence,  
Husbonde, fader, with other eek also,  
Bi and bi rehersyng in sentence  
The circumstaunces off hir hertli wo.  
And or that I any ferther go,  
Vnder hope my lord will me supporte,  
What that she saide I will to you reporte.

[p. 157]

1004

1008

[The greuous compleynt of Lucrece vpon hir oppres-  
sioun.] <sup>1</sup>

"My lord, since  
I, Lucrece, am  
joined to you in  
marriage as your  
humble subject,

"FOR-ASMOCHE," quod she, "as I Lucrece  
Am be the lawe ioyned in mariage  
To the, my lord, whos loue shal ay encrece  
Towardis the, with al the surplusage  
Off wifli trouthe tenduren al myn age,  
As humble subiect with feithful obeisaunce  
Vnder thi lordshipe and thi gouernaunce,

1012

983. Pierinis R, Pieryns H, Pierins J, pyernus R 3, pyrtus H 5,  
Pierius P. 986. hir] his H.

991. onto] to R. 996. dedli] dooleful H. 997. hir] his R.  
999. Al] And R. 1000. folk] om. R. 1006. any] may R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 64 verso.

O Colatyn, my lord and trewe husbonde,  
 Best beloued off hool affeccioun,  
 I will no mor no quarell take on honde  
 Nor in no wise make non accioun,  
 Withoute that thou list endlyne doun  
 Goodli thyn eris to yiue me audience  
 To that I shall reherse in thi presence.

1016 O best beloved  
 Collatine, I will  
 take no action  
 until you have  
 heard my story.

1020

Iniurie doon or any maner wrong  
 Ageyn my worshepe or myn honeste,  
 Bi the lawe my sentence is maad strong,  
 It touchet[h] you also weel as me,  
 I am so hooli yolden onto the, —  
 Thou art myn hed, who cleerli can discerne,  
 Lord and husbonde my bodi to gouerne.

1024 "Injury done to  
 my honesty  
 touches you as  
 well as me.

1028

Parcial causes in sooth ther may non be  
 Atwen vs tweyne nor no disseuraunce:  
 For soote and bittir, ioie and aduersite,  
 We must hem weie bothe in o balaunce,  
 Countirpeise our sorwes [&] our plesaunce,  
 Entirmedle all thyng that is in doubte,  
 Receyue our fortune as it komth aboute.

1032 There may be  
 no sundering of  
 our joy and  
 adversity: we  
 must weigh  
 them both in one  
 balance;

1036

Ther may atwen vs be no menyng double,  
 But oon herte, o will and o corage.  
 And as [a] woman that stondeh now in trouble,  
 Withoute polishyng off any fair language,  
 I mut disclose to you the gret outrage  
 Doon onto me, and pleykli it discure,  
 Which to redresse lith hooli in your cure.

1040 and as no deceit  
 can be between  
 us, I must  
 frankly disclose  
 to you my  
 outrage, which  
 it lies in your  
 power to  
 redress.

For the mater, to speke in woordes pleyne,  
 A-riht out serchid and the trouthe out founde,  
 As a iust cause, ondifferant to tweyne  
 Toward vs bothe the quarell doth rebounde.  
 And mor strongli our mater for to grounde,  
 Reherse I will, so that ye sauff it vouche,  
 A mortall wrong which the & me doth touche.

1044 "It is a mortal  
 wrong, which  
 you must clearly  
 understand.

1048

1018. no] none R.

1022. reherse in thi presence] rehersen in sentence H.

1024. or] & R. 1027. hooli] om. R.

1034. &] om. J, H 5, R 3.

1037. menyng] mevyng R.

1038. o will o hert H — 2nd o] one R.

1045. A-riht] at riht H.

"I was in a castle called Col-  
lace, when young Tarquin  
appeared without  
warning.

In a castell which callid is Collace,  
Off which my lord heer hath the gouernaunce, 1052  
Tarquyn the yonge cam into that place.  
I, full diswarre to make purueiaunce  
Ageyn his comyng or any ordenaunce,  
Toforn nat warnyd off his officeris, 1056  
Sat onpurueied among my chaumbereris.

"To avoid  
idleness I and  
my women sat  
spinning soft  
wools.

Off entent teshewen idilnesse,  
We sat and span vpon wolles soffte;  
For she off vices is a cheeff maistresse 1060  
Wher she is cherissid & iset alofte:  
But off custum as I haue do ful offte,  
I and my women duli as we ouhte,  
Tauoide slouthe ful bisili we wrouhte. 1064

"He came in  
very respectfully  
and deceived me  
with words that  
were contrary  
to his heart.

His ent[e]ryng was meek and debonaire,  
Benygne off port, off look & off visage,  
With a pretence off many woordes faire, 1068  
In whos menyng was ful gret outrage,  
His cheer contrarie\* onto his corage.  
In this wise ther he was receuyed,  
Wherbi, alas, I falsli was deceyued!

"I received him  
courteously, as  
became a man  
of his position:  
yet all the while  
he intended to  
betray me.

At pryme face, as me thouhte it due, 1072  
I hym receyued at his in comyng:  
Roos up meekli and gan hym to salue,  
As appertened in alle maner thyng  
Onto the sone off a worthi kyng. 1076  
And treuli Tarquyn, for which I seie alas,  
Me to be-traisshe stood in the same caas.

The son of a  
king should be  
a protector of  
women and play  
the part of a  
knight.

A kynges sone sholde off du[e]te<sup>1</sup>  
Been to wommen wall and proteccioun, 1080  
Preserue and keepe hem in al surete,  
That no man sholde, off no presumpcioun,  
Doon hem no wrong nor oppressioun,

1058. teshewen] to shew B. 1064. we] om. R.  
1067. many] may R. 1069. contraire B. 1074. to] om. R.

<sup>1</sup> The following five lines, to which are appended the two last of the preceding stanza, are inserted before line 1079 as a complete stanza in the Phillipps-Garrett MS., section 10, leaf 6 a:

I trusted well his riall noblesse  
Be any sing pat y koup a spie  
He no ping ment but troupe & gentillesse  
But off falleth as clerkes specifice  
Vndre fair speche men may treson wrye.



Rather deie than seen hem suffre onriht,  
Aduertisyng the office off a knyght.

1084

But in contraire off knyghthod he hath wrouht, [p.158]  
Be fals outrage doon ageyn[e]s me.

"But Tarquin  
only sought  
means to break  
both civil and  
natural law in  
my person.

Wrong[e] weies and crokid menys souht  
Off lawes tweyne to breke the liberte,  
And difface the auctorite  
Off lawe ciuyle & natural also,  
In my persone offending bothe too.

1088

1092

First be his fals[e] subtil compassyng  
He gan espie thestris off the place;  
And whan a-bedde alone I lay slepyng,  
Lik a leoun, ful sterne off look and face,  
With his lefft hand my throte he dede embrace,  
And in his other heeld ageyn al lawe  
Me for toppresse a naked suerd idrawe.

"First he spied  
out the inner  
rooms, and then,  
when I lay  
asleep in bed,  
he came on me  
like a lion,

1096

Thus afforcyng my wifli chastite,  
Ageyn knyghthod he dede this gret offence,  
Mi liff, my worshepe put in perplexite,  
Hauyng no myht to make resistence, —  
Me manacyng be dedli violence,  
The ton off tweyne: to deie in his entente,  
Or to auoutri\* falsli to consente.

1100 and, seizing me  
by the throat,  
threatened my  
life with a naked  
sword if I would  
not consent to  
commit  
adultery.

1104

Thus I stood sool atwen deth & diffame,  
Mi bodi corrupt, my sperit abood[e] cleene;  
Mi spousaile broke, & my good[e] name  
For euer disclaundered, that whilom shon ful sheene.  
Euel fame off custum will alwei wexe greene,  
Neuer deie, the peeples so hem disporte  
The werste off thynges gladli to reporte.

1108 "Thus I stood  
between death  
and dishonour,  
my body cor-  
rupted, my spirit  
pure; but my  
good name  
destroyed for  
ever.

1112

Alas, alas! among my sorwes all,  
This oon the moste that doth myn herte agrise; —  
I am nat worthi that men me sholde call,  
Or haue the name in no maner wise,  
For thoffence which ye han herd deuise,  
To be callid, in this wrecchid liff,  
Off Collatyn from hen[ne]sfoorth the wiff.

1116 "Alas, the most  
terrible of my  
sorrows is that I  
am no longer  
worthy to be  
called your wife!

1120

1106. tauoutri B.

1108. my] in H.

1112. hem so H.

1113. thynges] al H.

1115. the] om. R.



"My eyes are  
blinded with  
shame: never  
may I be  
reckoned as an  
honest matron!

Myn eien also be blyndid with derknesse,  
Onli for shame to leffen vp ther siht,  
Outher ther stremys or bemys vp to dresse,  
Off the cleer heuene to looke vpon the liht.  
Nor I mai neuer been off the noumbre off riht,  
Off trewe matrones, among hem ferr nor neer,  
For to be rekned in ther kalendeer.

1124

"Let my injury  
be so punished  
that it may  
become a lasting  
example to  
adulterers.

Lat myn Iniurie and this mortal cryme  
Be so pun[y]shed off riht and equite,  
Without delay off any lenger tyme,  
That euer afftir it may exaample be  
Thoruh al the world and eek in this cite, —  
With such a payne therupon deuised,  
That all auoutours may be therbi chastised.

1128

"And if it seems  
to you that I too  
am culpable, I  
will patiently  
accept my  
punishment."

And yiff it seeme in your opynyoun,  
In this caas I sholde been onpure,  
I will receyue iust punycioun  
And the payne pacientli endure,  
Yiff it so stonde that paraenture  
Ye deeme off resoun, that be so iust & stable,  
In this mateer that I be coupable."

1136

After she had  
told her story  
and they had  
absolved her of  
all blame and  
promised to  
avenge her  
wrong, she took  
a sharp knife and  
pierced herself  
to the heart.

Hir tale told. Whan thei longe hadde musid  
On this compleynt in ther inward siht,  
Off trouthe echon thei heeld hir ful excusid,  
Made all beheste, with al ther ful[le] myht  
Tauenge hir wrong; and Lucrece anon riht  
Took a sharp knyff, or thei myhte aduerte,  
And rooff hirsilff euene thoruh the herte.

1144

1148

¶ The Complaynt of Bochas Oppon þe luxurie of  
Princis by examplis of diuers myschevis.<sup>1</sup>

Bochas in hot  
indignation  
wrote a com-  
plaint against  
those princes,

**B**OCHAS in herte brennyng hoot as fir  
Off verai ire and indignacioun  
Ageyn tho princis, which in ther desir  
Han fulli set ther delectacioun,  
Ther felicite and ther affeccioun  
To folwe ther lustis off fals lecherie,  
Froward spousbreche and off auoutrie.

1152

1125. neuer] *om.* R. 1126. nor] or R.  
1140. be] it be H. 1141. coulpage R.  
1148. thoruh] to H. 1149. hoot] as hoot H.

<sup>1</sup> *The same heading in J and R. by] as by J — many dyuers J — myschevis] myschaunces R, J.*

He writ ageyn hem that seeke occasiouns,  
 Places off lust to han ther libertees  
 For to fulfille ther delectaciouns;  
 And for tacomplisshe ther gret dishonestees,  
 Deuyse out tauernes in burwes & citees,  
 And sitting ther among ther cumpanye,  
 Afftir the deede thei booste off ther folye.

1156 who, following  
 their evil  
 desires, commit  
 adultery, and  
 afterwards  
 publicly boast  
 of their folly.

1160

Yiff any man pynche at ther outrage,  
 Or them rebuke for ther tran[s]gressiouns,  
 Thei will ansuere with froward fals language,  
 And for ther parti allegge gret resouns:  
 First how it longeth to ther condiciouns  
 Be riht off Nature, as it is weel kouth,  
 Freli to vse lecheri in youth;

[p. 159] If any man  
 rebuke them,  
 they will tell  
 him that it is  
 a law of  
 nature to do  
 such things in  
 one's youth,

1168

Afferme also, how lawe of Kynde is fre,  
 And so afforce hem to sustene ther partie  
 Bexauple off Dauid, which that took Bersabe,  
 And for hir sake how he slouh Vrie,  
 Dede manslauhtre and fals auoutrie, —  
 For hem aleggyng, ageyn riht and resoun,  
 For Dalida the luxure off Sampson.

and allege  
 David and  
 Bathsheba and  
 Samson and  
 Delilah in their  
 defence,

1172

1176

The stori also thei frowardli applie,  
 How for a woman prudent Salamoun,  
 The Lord offendyng, dede ydolatrie.  
 And in diffence off ther opynyoun,  
 Reherse these storyes for excusacioun  
 Off ther errour, therbi a pris to wynne,  
 As tofor God lecheri wer no synne.

and tell also how  
 Solomon be-  
 came an idolater  
 for the love of a  
 woman; — as if  
 harlotry were no  
 sin before God!

1180

Thei nat considre in ther entencioun  
 Off these stories eueri circumstaunce:  
 First off kyng Dauid the gret contricioun,  
 Nor vpon Sampson how God took gret vengeance;  
 First how he loste his force & his puissaunce  
 For his offence — thei ha[ue] nat this in mynde,  
 Nor how that bothe his eien wer maad blynde.

1184 They never con-  
 sider David's  
 remorse or  
 God's ven-  
 geance on  
 Samson,

1188

Nor ther resouns thei list nat to enclyne  
 For to conceyue in ther discrecioun,  
 The sperit off wisdam, heuenli & dyuyne,  
 Was take away fro prudent Salamoun  
 In chastisyng for his transgressioun.

or how Solo-  
 mon was  
 deprived of his  
 spirit of wisdom  
 for his offence,  
 and, as some  
 doctors affirm,  
 sorely repented  
 afterwards.

1192

1157. lust] lustes R.

1171. so afforce] tafforce H.

And summe doctours affermen ouermore,  
How Salamon repentid hym ful sore. 1196

People say that  
the licentious-  
ness of youth is  
natural to all  
healthy animals;  
they think only  
of vicious  
pleasures and lie  
and boast and  
now-a-days hold  
horrible oaths,  
flattery and  
ribald speech  
courtesy.

The play off youthe folk calle it lecherie,  
Seyn that it is a gamen off Nature,  
And to sustene and bern vp ther partie,  
How it sit weel, be record off scripture,  
Onto euerich liffli creature  
That stant in helthe and is coraious,  
Off verrai kynde for to be lecherous. 1200  
1204

Vicious report thei han in remembraunce,  
But vertuous thyng is ferr out off mynde;  
Flessfli lustis and lecherous plesaunce  
In ther desirs be nat lefft behynde. 1208  
Auauentyng, lieng thei can off newe out fynde;  
And now-adaies thei holde curtesie  
Othes horrible, flatryng and ribaudie.

They never  
think of noble  
Scipio and of his  
advice to  
Masinissa either  
to leave  
Sophonisba alone  
or else marry her.

In ther auys thei taken litil heede  
Onto the doctryn off noble Scipioun,  
Which comaundid, in story as I reede,  
To Masmissa, ful famous off renoun,  
Nat to touche be no condicioun  
Sophonisba, fairest off visage,  
But yiff it were be weie off mariage. 1212  
1216

Although of  
royal blood,  
she was virtuous  
and wedded to  
King Syphax,  
who reigned in  
Numidia.

Thouh she wer born off the blood roiall,  
Hir youthe was set to al honeste,  
Douhter and hair to noble Hastruball,  
Duc off Cartage, the story ye may see;  
And for hir vertues off femynyte,  
She weddid was, off berthe as she was lik,  
To kyng Siphax, which regned in Affrik. 1220  
1224

To prove the  
liberty of virtue  
and the  
thraldom of vice,  
Cato shewed  
that the former  
is never subject  
to Fortuna.

And for to preue the grete liberte  
Which is in vertu conveied be resoun,  
And the fals thraldam off dishoneste, —  
Off bothe to make a pleyn comparisoun,  
Afftir the doctryn off Censoryn Catoun,  
Shewid be hym to folkis in comune,  
That vertu neuer is subiect to Fortune: 1228  
1232

1196. evir more H. 1199. a game H.  
1210. holde it curtasye H. 1215. Mascinissa P.  
1223. vertues] vertuous R.  
1224. was weddyd R.

Vertu conserueth mesour and resoun,  
 Considreth thynges afor or thei befall,  
 Takith non enprises but off discrecioun,  
 And on prudence foundeth hir werkes all;  
 Ay to hir counsail attempraunce she doth call,  
 Warli prouydyng in hirsilff withynne  
 The eende off thynges tofor or she begynne.

Virtue has foresight and undertakes nothing without discretion,

1236

This was the doctryn tauht fourth off Catoun,  
 Lecherous lustis to put hem vndir foote,  
 Grauntyng to vertu the domynacioun,  
 Plukke up vices, braunche, cropp & roote.  
 Frut off goodnesse groweth up so soote,  
 Whan it is plauntid off youthe in a corage,  
 It neuer appalleth in helthe off his tarage.

1240 which was Cato's doctrine.

1244

Catoun with vertu was a cheeff officer,  
 Preferryng euer comoun commodites  
 Tofor profites that wer synguler;  
 Tenhauce the comoun in kyngdames & citees,  
 Ther wittis peised and ther habilitees,  
 Personys promotyng, in whom it was supposid,  
 That thei in vertu wer natureli disposid.

[p. 160] Cato always preferred the welfare of the people to individual advantage,

1248

1252

Manli off herte he was ay to susteene  
 Indifferentli trouthe and al iustise;  
 Flesshli delites off folk that wer oncleene  
 He was ay redi be rigour to chastise,  
 And sette lawes in ful prudent wise  
 For to punshe flaterers and lechours  
 And such as wern openli auoutours.

and supported justice and truth, and was ever ready to punish unclean folk.

1256

1260

He hadde off wommen non opynyoun  
 With hem to dele for lust nor for beute,  
 But yiff it were for procreacioun, —  
 So stable he was founde in his degre,  
 The book reedyng off immortalite  
 Which Plato made, the trouthe weel out souht,  
 Therin concludyng, how soulis deie nouht,

He had no desire to have ado with women except for procreation,

1264

But lyueth euer outhur in ioie or payne.  
 Thus wrot Plato in his orygynall:  
 Men may the body be deth ful weel constreyne,

1268 and read Plato's book on the immortality of the soul.

1235. Emprises H. 1237. she] he R.

1239. tofor or she] or they R. 1245. a] om. R.

1246. in helthe off] of helth in H, in hegh of R 3, in heyth of P.

1265. Immortalite H. 1268. lyueth] lyven H.

1269. Thus] this H.



But the soule abyt ay inmortall.  
 For which this Catoun, stedfast as a wall,  
 For comoun profit to deie was nat afferd,  
 Whan he hymself slouh with a naked suerd.

1272

Cato was not  
 afraid to die for  
 the common  
 weal, saying to

But to Fortune aforn his deth he saide,  
 "O thou pryncesse off worldli goodes veyne,  
 To thi flatereris I neuer dede abraide,  
 Thi fauour is so fals and oncerteyne  
 That neuer I fauht no fraunchise to atteyne  
 As for my-silff, nor parcial syngulerte,  
 But al for profit touchyng the comounte.

1276

1280

Fortune, "I  
 never yielded to  
 thy flattery nor  
 sought gain for  
 myself. I resisted  
 Cesar for free-  
 dom's sake and  
 forsook life,  
 despising the  
 world."

A-geyn Cesar I made resistance,  
 To conquere fredam to me & to the toun,  
 Freli teschewe his mortal violence,  
 This world despisyng in myn opynyoun, —  
 Our fraunchise thrallid vnder subieccioun,  
 Iustli forsakyng the variaunce off this liff,  
 Mi soule conueied to be contemplatiff."

1284

1288

Before his death  
 this prudent old  
 Cato wrote  
 beseeching im-  
 moral princes to  
 follow the  
 example of  
 Drusus,

This philisophre, this prudent old Catoun,  
 Tendryng in herte comoun comoditees,  
 To forn his deth wrot off compassioun  
 To them that sat in roial dignitees,  
 Which hadde off vertu lost the libertees,  
 Pryncis besechyng, that wer luxurious,  
 To take exaample and folwe kyng Drusus.

1292

who loved virtue  
 and was always  
 faithful to his  
 wife.

¶ The which[e] Drusus, be successioun  
 Heir to Augustus, was next hym emperour,  
 Sett al in vertu his affeccioun,  
 And it to cherishe dede hooli his labour.  
 To lust onleefful he neuer gaff fauour;  
 And touchyng loue, duryng all his liff,  
 He neuer hadde lust but onli to his wiff.

1296

1300

Once when  
 asked with  
 incredulous  
 impertinence  
 what sort of  
 attraction could  
 his wife have  
 for him,

And in his paleis, myd off his roiall see,  
 Off noble pryncis duellyng in Rome toun  
 He axed was, for al his dignite,  
 What maner corage or temptacioun,  
 Or what feruence or delectacioun

1304

1271. Immortall H, R.

1277. flaters H.

1279. fauht] auht H.

1280. nor] no R.

1286. Our] or H.

1287. this] his H.

1293. the] ther H.

1302. to] til H.

Withynne hymself he hadde off louys play, 1308  
Sool bi his wiff whan he a-bedde lay.

And lik a prynce fulfillid off hih noblesse, he answered  
Ansuerde ageyn with sobre cuntenaunce, simply, that he  
"Touchyng such lust as folweth flesschlynesse, 1312 had never  
Lik as Nature me put in gouernaunce, known another.  
In oon alone is set al my plesaunce:  
For with non other for no concupiscence,  
Sauff with my wiff I neuer dede offence." 1316

Pryncis echon folwe nat the traas All princes  
Off noble Drusus, as ye shal vndirstonde; have not  
For summe ha[ue] stonde\* al in a-nother caas, — followed in  
Such as can holde too or thre on honde, 1320 Drusus' foot-  
Now heer, now ther, as botis home to londe, steps.  
Nat considryng ther cres nor disauail,  
Whan newfangilnesse bloweth in ther sail.

¶ Eek Bochas writith, sum princis ha[ue] be Some even go so  
founde, 1324 far as to seduce  
Which viciousli ha[ue] do ther besy peyne, virtuous women  
Vertuous wommen be flatrie to confounde, by flattery and  
And tendre maidnes to bryngen in a treyne, young girls with  
Such manacis & tormentis to ordeyne, 1328 brutal threats  
Them to transfourme from ther perseuraunce and torments.  
And interrupte ther virgynal constaunce.

But off such folk that yeue no fors off shame, [p. 161] Of all such  
Nor dreede God such treynes to deuise, 1332 shameless  
Husbondmen in soth ar most to blame people married  
With foreyn women to trespass in such wise: men are the  
I trowe ther wyues may hem inouh suffise; worst: I'm  
For many ar feeble ther dettis for to quyte, 1336 sure their wives  
Thouh thei in chaung themsilff falsli delite. are quite  
sufficient for  
most of them,  
although they  
delight in  
change,

Summe afferme, for themsilff alleggyng, and say that  
To such outrage that thei ha[ue] licence Nature gives  
Freeli off Nature to vse ther owne thyng, them permission  
And in such caas to no wiht doon offence. 1340 to do as they  
please with their  
own bodies.  
But they are  
very hateful to  
God.  
But froward is ther error in sentence,  
Fro bond off wedlok, whan thei be so onstable,  
And tofor God most hatful and dampnable. 1344

1311. Ageyn answerd R. 1317. traas] trac is H.  
1319. stonden B. 1323. blowen H.  
1333. ar] be R, er H. 1337. falsly hem silff H.  
1338. ther silff H. 1343. Fro] For H.

Reason distinguishes the life of man from that of animals. She has given him the knowledge of right and wrong and the power to resist vice,

For she that is thoruh hir hih noblesse  
Namyd off clerkis, which cleerli can concerne,  
Douhter off God, ladi and pryncesse,  
Resoun callid, to guye man and gouerne, 1348  
Tween good and euel iustli to discerne, —  
She hath departid, pleyntli to concludre,  
The liff off man fro liff off beestis rude.

and shewn him that once she has fled away, he becomes a beast rather

This ladi Resoun, sithen go ful yore, 1352  
Gaff onto man witt and discrecioun,  
Tauhte hym also bi hir souereyn lore  
Twen vice and vertu a gret dyuysioun,  
And that he sholde in his eleccioun 1356  
Onto al vertu naturali obeie,  
And in contraire al vicious liff werreie, —

than a human being.

And to enprente in his memorial,  
How off luxure the gret dishoneste 1360  
Difforme a man & make hym bestial,  
And disfigure, off what estaat he be:  
For whan that resoun, in hih or low degre,  
Is fled away, folk may afferme than, 1364  
He is lik a beeste rather than a man.

Therefore let princes amend their lives and punish all those who would destroy the honest fame of women.

Wherfor lat pryncis that ha[ue] be defectiff  
To folwe ther lustis off sensualite,  
Shape hem be resoun for tamende ther liff 1368  
And to conserue and keepe ther chastite,  
Bothe off virgines\* and wifflis honeste,  
And to pun[y]she all tho that list laboure  
The honest fame off wommen to deuoure. 1372

For who can give back a good name once it is lost?

For whan a lechour be force or be maistrie  
Defoulid hath off virgynes the clenness, 1376  
Widwes oppressid, and be auoutrie  
Assailed wyues that stood in stabilnesse,  
Who mai thanne ther sclaunderous harm redresse,  
Whan ther good name is hurt be such report? —  
For fame lost onys can neuer haue his resort.

1348. man] folk R.  
1360. luxurie R.  
1362. he] thei H.  
1368. for] for to R.  
1370. virgines] wyuys B.

A theeff may robbe a man off his richesse  
 And be sum mene make restitucioun;  
 And sum man may disherite & oppresse  
 A poore man from his possessioun,  
 And afftir[ward] make satisfaccioun;  
 But no man may restore in no degre  
 A maide robbid off hir virgynyte.

1380 Thieves and  
 oppressors of  
 the poor can  
 make  
 restitution; but  
 no man can  
 restore to a  
 maid her  
 1384 lost chastity.

A man mai also bete a castell doun,  
 And beelde it afftir mor fresshli to the siht,  
 Exile a man out off a region  
 And hym reuke, wher it be wrong or riht;  
 But no man hath the poweer nor the myht  
 For to restore the paleis virgynal  
 Off chastite, whan broken is the wal.

A castle can be  
 pulled down and  
 1388 afterwards re-  
 built; an exile  
 may be recalled;

Men mai also put out off seruisse,  
 And officeres remeue from ther place,  
 And at a day, whan Fortune list deuise,  
 Thei mai ageyn restored been to grace;  
 But ther is nouthur tyme set nor space,  
 Nor neuer in story nouthur rad nor seyn,  
 That maidenhed lost recurid was ageyn.

officials and  
 menials can be  
 discharged and  
 again taken into  
 1396 service; but  
 it has never  
 been told that  
 maidenhood  
 once lost was  
 ever again  
 recovered.

For which men sholde haue a conscience,  
 Rewe in ther herte and repente sore,  
 And ha[ue] remors off ther gret offence,  
 To rauysshe thyng which thei may nat restore.  
 For it is said and hath be said ful yore,  
 The emeraud greene off parfit chastite,  
 Stole onys away may nat recurid be.

1400 For this reason  
 men should have  
 conscience and  
 not take what  
 they cannot  
 return.

And hard it is to rauysshe a tresour  
 Which off nature is nat recuperable;  
 Lordshipe may nat, off kyng nor emperour,  
 Refourme a thyng which is nat reformable:  
 Rust off diffame is inseparable,  
 And maidenheed[e] lost off newe or yore,  
 No man alvue mai it ageyn restore.

1408 Even the lord-  
 ship of kings  
 cannot repair  
 that which  
 is irrevocably  
 ruined.

1381. sum mene] forne men H.

1384. afftirward] afftir J, P, H 5—afftirward make] aftir  
 make dew R 3.

1389. 2nd a] his H. 1390. wher] whedir R.

1398. tyme nouthir H. 1404. thei may] maist H.

1413. maydenhoode H.

1414. on lyve H.



The old Romans  
patiently put up  
with tyrants and  
robbers, but they  
were careful to  
punish adul-  
terers,

Romeyns olde thoruh ther pacience  
Suffrede tirantis in ther tirannyes,  
And in ther cite to do gret violence,  
The peepel toppresse with ther robberies;  
But to pun[y]she thei sette streiht espies  
On fals auoutours, at it is weel kouth,  
Widwes to rauysshe & maidnes in ther youth.

[p. 162]

1416

1420

as is shewn by  
the exile of King  
Tarquin and the  
death of Appius  
Claudius.

Vpon this mateer the stori berth witnessse,  
Touchyng thexil off kyng Tarquynus,  
Afforn rehersed be writyng ful expresse  
The hatful deth off Appius Claudius  
For his trespas doon to Virgynus,  
The iugementis rehersed and the peyne;  
And fro ther office depryued bothe tweyne.

1424

1428

Was not the city  
of the Shechem-  
ites laid  
desolate for  
the crime of  
Shechem against  
Dinah?

Was nat the cite whilom desolat  
Off Synachites for the\* ribaudie  
Off oon Sychem, which gan a gret debat  
To haue\* acomplished his foul lecherie,  
Whan yonge Dyna, as bookis specefie,  
Wente rek[el]lesli walkyng vp and down  
To seen the maidnes off that roial toun?

1432

He saw her  
walking alone  
and assaulted  
her, for she had  
no chance to run  
away;

But whan Sichem this Dyna dede espie  
Sool bi hirselff[e] walke in the cite,  
He gan anon assaile hir be maistrie,  
And for tafforcen hir virgynyte,  
Because she hadde no leiser for to fle.  
Whos gret offence and transgressioun  
The cite brouhte onto destruccioun.

1436

1440

but her father  
Jacob and her  
brothers Simeon  
and Levi and all  
her kin

Hir fadir Iacob & hooli hir kynreede  
Ageyn this Sichem gan inwardli disdeyne;  
Whan the furie off Mars was most to dreede,  
To be vengid thei dede ther besy peyne.  
And speciali hir worthi brethren tweyne  
Fill on the cite, Symeon and Leuy,  
Tauenge ther suster & stroie it fynaly.

1444

1448

1417. citees R.

1418. The] with H.

1422. the] ther R.

1428. ther] the R.

1430. the] ther B, J, H, R, the H 1, H 5, Sloane, R 3.

1431. sichen R. 1432. Taue B.

1433. bookis] bochas R.

So mortalli thei gan with hem stryue,  
 With ther suerdis grounde sharp & keene,  
 Off male childre thei leffte non alyue,  
 Thei wer so vengable in ther furious teene.  
 The Sichanytes myhte nat susteene  
 That dai ageyn hem to stonden at diffence,  
 So importable was ther violence.

fell on that city  
 and left no male  
 child alive.

1452

1456

For wher that God list punshe a man off riht  
 Bi mortal suerd, farweel al resistance:  
 Whan grace faileth, away goth force & myht,  
 Feblith off pryncis the magnyficence,  
 Chaungeth ther\* power into inpotence,  
 Reuersith the kynges ther statli regalie,  
 Exaumples in Sichem, for his fals ribaudie.

For where grace  
 is lacking and  
 God punishes,  
 there can be no  
 resistance.

1460

It was an hard dreedful punycioun,  
 That, O Pryncis, trespas in lecherie  
 Caused afor God that al a regioun  
 Destroied was withoute remedie.  
 This story told[e] for texemplefie,  
 Whan noble pryncis to wommen them submitte,  
 Grace and al fauour anon doth fro them flitte.

1464 It was a hard  
 punishment, the  
 destruction of  
 an entire region;  
 yet such things  
 happen when  
 princes become  
 uxorious.

1468

Off this stori what sholde I write mor?  
 In Genesis the residue ye may reede,  
 The deth off Sichem and off kyng Emor,  
 And how ther kyngdam destroied was in deede.  
 Off Sichanites, loo, heer the fynal meede,  
 Off lecherie and off his fals plesaunce,  
 Which many a rewm hath brouht onto myschaunce!

1472 I shall not tell  
 you any more of  
 this story; you  
 can read it  
 in Genesis.

1476

¶ What sholde I eftt reherse ageyn or write  
 The fals auoutri off Paris and Heleyne?  
 Ther woful fall Guido dede endite;  
 Poetis echon dede eek ther besi payne  
 To declare, how onli bi these twayne  
 The worthi blood, for short conclusioun,  
 Off Troie and Grece cam to destruccioun.

1480 And why should  
 I write again  
 about Paris and  
 Helen? Guido  
 and other poets  
 have declared  
 how all the  
 noble blood of  
 Troy and  
 Greece came  
 to an end on  
 their account.

1484

1451. sharp] & sharp H. 1455. stonden] stoden R.  
 1458. al] & R. 1461. ther] the B — Impotence H, R.  
 1463. fals] om. R.  
 1468. This] be H.  
 1471. stori] mateer R.  
 1475. Sychamytes H.  
 1478. ageyne reherce R.

But offte it fallith that mekil habundaunce  
 Off worldli good, with gret ese and richesse,  
 In folkis that sette al hooli ther plesaunce  
 To folwe ther lustis off froward wilfulnesse, 1488  
 Hath caused in londes gret myscheeff & distresse,  
 Whan vicious liff ther corages dede encoumbre,  
 Destroied kyngdames & peeplis out off noumbre.

When people  
 will not turn  
 from their  
 licentiousness,  
 they are in-  
 evitably brought  
 to confusion, like  
 the Gibeonites,

For whan the peeple thoruh fals obstynacie 1492  
 Is indurat tamende hem and correcte,  
 And wil nat turne hem from ther lecherie,  
 But ay ar redi ther soules to infecte, —  
 And onto purpos my stile I will directe, 1496  
 Texemplefie how Gabaa the toun  
 Was for his synne brouht to confusioun.

Whilom this peeple callid Gabanytes, [p. 163]  
 From Beniamyn descendid in ther lyne, 1500  
 Wer ai disposid to folwe ther delites,  
 And off custum ther wittis dede enclyne  
 In worldli plente to flouren & to shyne,  
 And dempte alwai, to them it was most due 1504  
 Off wilfulnesse ther lustis for to sue.

who outraged  
 the Levite's wife

In lecherie was set al ther plesaunce,  
 And in that vice thei ladde most ther liff,  
 Werbi thei wer[e]n brouht onto myschaunce, 1508  
 And many on slayn be ful mortal striff,  
 Whan the Leuite cam forbi with his wiff,  
 Ful excellent off fetures and beute,  
 And took his loggyng withynne that gret cite. 1512

and caused her  
 death,

He was ful old, and she was inli fair,  
 He inpotent and she but tendre off age,  
 Thoruh Gabaa makying ther repair.  
 The citeseyns off inportune rage, 1516  
 Shewing the furie off ther gret outrage,  
 So longe that nyht hir beute dede assaile,  
 Till liff and breth attonys dede faile.

1485. it] *om.* H.

1490. corage R.

1498. his] this H — to] *om.* R.

1507. vice] wyse R.

1514. inpotent R, H.

1516. inportune R, H.

- Contagious was the sclandre & diffame,\*  
 In Iudicum the story ye mai reede,  
 Which to reherse is a maner shame,  
 To heere thabusiou<sup>n</sup> off that foule deede;  
 And how the Leuite amorwe gan take\* heede  
 With pitous cheer, & sauh his yonge wiff  
 Tofor the gate depryued off hir liff.
- He hente hir up & leid hir on his asse;  
 To noise this crym vpon eueri side,  
 Thouhte in such caas he myhte do no lasse, —  
 Took a sharp suerd, & list no lenger bide,  
 On twelue parties he gan hir to deuide,  
 And to ech Tribe off Jacob he hath sent  
 A certeyn parti, to seen ther iugement.
- Which thyng to hem was hatful & terrible,  
 And in ther siht ful abhomynable.  
 And in al haste likli and possible,  
 Alle off o will and o corage stable,  
 On Gabonites for to be vengable  
 Thei gadred han, shortli to conclude,  
 Tassaile that toun a ful gret multitude.
- Whan thei first mette, atwen hem thus it stood:  
 The twelue Tribus wer twies put to fliht,  
 On outhr parti gret quantite off blood  
 Was shad among hem in that mortal fihit;  
 For sexti thousand, who that counte ariht,  
 Wer slay[e]n ther, the stori wil nat lie,  
 Tauenge the sclandre off fals avoutrie.
- Loo, heer the guerdoun off the froward firis  
 In lecherous folk, that wil nat staunchid be,  
 That brente so hoothe thoruh bestial desiris  
 In Gabaa the myhti strong cite,  
 Which was destroyed for his iniquite,  
 And almost brouht off Beniamyn the lyne  
 Thoruh this offence to eternal ruyne.

1520 and brought  
great slander  
and defame on  
themselves, as  
is told in  
Judges.

1544

1528 The Leuite  
divided her  
body into 12  
parts and sent  
one to each of  
the Twelve  
Tribes,

1532

1536 who resolved to  
take vengeance  
on the  
Gibeonites,

1540

1544 and fought a  
battle with  
them in which  
sixty thousand  
men were slain  
and their city  
destroyed and  
the line of  
Benjamin  
almost brought  
to ruin for ever.

1548

1552

1520. was] *om.* J, P — &] & the B, R, H, J, H 5.

1524. on morwe R — taken B.

1527. hente] sent H — on] vpon H. 1530. abide H.

1531. hir] hir hede R. 1532. to] *om.* R.

1537. 2nd o] of o R. 1540. that] the R.

1542. Tribus] tribs H. 1546. ther] *om.* R.

1553. off] to H.



Holofernes too  
was decapitated  
by Judith for  
his drunken lust,

¶ Eek for his feruent dronken lecherie  
Oloffernes be Iudith loste his hed;  
And al his host and al his cheualrie  
Lefte the feeld & fledde awei for dreed,  
And he lai bathed in his blood al red.  
Thus thoruh this vice, yiff it be weel souht,  
Ful many a prynce hath be brouht to nouht.

1556

1560

and many a  
prince has come  
to his end for  
this vice.

These said[e] stories ouhte inouh suffise,  
Yiff men wolde considre & taken heede,  
The grete vengauces in many sundri wise  
Which God hath take for this synne in deede,  
As in ther bookis thei may beholde & reede  
Warnynges afforn, ful offte put at preeff,  
How thei hemsilff shal saue fro myscheef.

1564

1568

### Lenvoye.

This tragedy  
warns us that  
many princes,  
together with  
their regions,  
have been  
destroyed  
because of their  
dissolute habits.

THIS tragedie yeueth vs a gret warnyng,  
Be cleer exaumples of manyfold resoun,  
How many a prince for ther mysleuyng,  
And many riche, roial, myhti toun,  
Many a cite and many a regioun  
Ha[ue] been euersid, ful notable & famous,  
For synne off pryncis that wer lecherous.

1572

David, who slew  
Uriah that he  
might possess  
Bathsheba, was  
well punished  
for it,

The chose off God, Dauid the worthi kyng,  
Prophete off prophetis, most souereyn off renoun,  
On Bersabe for a sodeyn lokyng  
To slen Vrie cauhte occasioun,  
For which he suffred gret punycioun,  
Chastised off God, he and al his hous,  
For cause onli that he was lecherous.

1576

1580

and repented  
sorely, writing  
psalms of  
contrition to  
make amends  
for his  
transgression.

Gret repentaunce he hadde & gret sorwyng, [p. 164]  
And made psalmis off gret contricioun,  
With woful teris & manyfold wepyng  
To make a-seeth for his transgressioun,  
Yeuyng to pryncis ful cleer direccioun  
For to eschewe\* the flatry odious  
And the fals fraude off wommen lecherous.

1584

1588

1569. a] *om.* H.  
1573. 2nd a] *om.* R.  
1588. teschewe B.

Wher was ther euere off science or cunnyng  
 So renommed as was kyng Salamoun?  
 Yit wommen made hym, thoruh[ther] fals flatteryng, 1592  
 To foreyn goddis doon oblacioun,  
 Which clipsid his honour & brouht his fame doun,  
 That was in wisdam whilom most vertuous,  
 Til he thoruh wommen fill to be lecherous. 1596

Who was there  
 ever more  
 famous for his  
 wisdom than  
 King Solomon?  
 Yet his honour  
 was darkened  
 by women.

Is it nat eek remembrid be writyng,  
 Off Israel how the cheeff[e] champioun,  
 Which goddis peeple hadde in his ledyng,  
 I meene the famous, myhti, strong Sampsoun, 1600  
 That thoruh his force to-rente the lyoun, —  
 But Dalida with teres plenteuous  
 His grace berafft hym & made hym lecherous.

Samson yielded  
 to the tears of  
 Delilah,

Sichem was slayn eek for the rauasshyng 1604  
 Off yong Dyna, as maad is mencioung;  
 His fader Emor brouh[t] to his eendying,  
 Lost his riches in that discencioun,  
 And his kyngdam brouht to destruccioun. 1608  
 Loo, heer the fyn off pryncis vicious,  
 Which them dispose for to be lecherous!

and Shechem  
 was slain for  
 seducing Dinah.

It is in erthe oon the moste pereilous thyng,  
 A prynce to been off his condicioun 1612  
 Effemynat, his wittis enclynyng,  
 Be fals desirs off flesschli mocioun,  
 To put hymselff vnder subieccioun,  
 And thralle his resoun, tresour most precious, 1616  
 To onleeful\* lustis, hatful & lecherous.

It is perilous  
 for a prince to  
 be effeminate  
 and to allow  
 his reason to  
 become thrall  
 to unlawful  
 desires;

This is the sentence ful pleynli in menyng:  
 Wher women haue the dominacioun  
 To holde the reyne, ther hookis out castyng, 1620  
 That sensualite ha[ue] iurediccioun  
 To entre on resoun bi fals intrusioun,  
 Werre ageyn vertu most contagious,  
 To be venquysshid off lustis lecherous, — 1624

for where  
 women have  
 domination and  
 sensuality con-  
 quers virtue,

It taketh fro men ther cleernesse off seyng,  
 Causeth gret siknessis and corrupcioun,  
 And to al vertu it is grettest hyndryng,

men become  
 corrupt in body  
 and grow old  
 before their  
 time.

1590. or] & R. 1591. Renowned H.

1592. ther] om. J, R. 1597. Is it] It is R. 1605. Off] As R.

1617. onleeful] thonleeful B, H, R, J.

1626. and] of H.

Maketh men seeme old, as be inspeccioun, 1628  
 Appallith ther mynde and disposicioun,  
 Shorteth ther daies, thyng dreedful & pitous,  
 Whan thei dispose hem for to be lecherous.

Noble Princes, beware the deception of women, especially such as love only for gain, who like Sirens, anoint your ears with sugared flattery.

Noble Pryncis, in your ymagynyng 1632  
 Conceyueth off wommen the fals decepcioun,  
 Namli off them that loue but for wynnyng,  
 And laboure ay for your possessioun,  
 Whos sugred flatrerie is fals collusioun, 1636  
 Lik to Sirenes with vois melodious  
 Enoynte your eres to make you lecherous.

[How Cambises assentyng to the moordre of his  
 brothir Mergus at last slouh himsilf.]<sup>1</sup>

After Cyrus, his son and heir Cambyzes came complaining to Bochas, that the Egyptians were idolaters and worshiped Apis, who was called god of gods by fools and slain by his brother.

A FFTIR the deth of myhti kyng Cirus, 1640  
 Next cam his sone callid Cambises,  
 Heir be successioun ful victorious,  
 Which tofor Bochas put hymself in pres  
 And gan his compleynt — this is dout[el]les, —  
 That thei off Egipt, in many vnkouth wise, 1644  
 To sundri goddis dede sacrificise.

First onto Apis thei dede reuerence,  
 Callid Serapis, ther grettest god off all,  
 Regnyng in Egipt off most excellence, 1648  
 And god of goddis foolis dede hym call.  
 And off his noblesse thus it is befall,  
 Slayn bi his brother, which is a gret wonder,  
 Seuered on pecis & ful ferr cast assonder. 1652

As the Egyptians held Apis in such honour, Cambyzes resolved to throw down all their temples;

And thei off Egipt made ther ordynaunces,  
 Vp payne off deth in ther statutis olde,  
 A god to calle hym, & doon ther obseruaunces  
 Withynne his templis, lik as thei wer holde. 1656  
 Wheroff Cambises, toform as I you tolde,  
 Alle the templis off that regioun  
 Cast hym be force for to throwe down.

1629. and] and ther R.  
 1647. ther] the R.  
 1659. throwe] throw hem H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 68 recto.

The temple off Iubiter to robbe it be rauyne,  
 Callid Amon, withoute excepcioun,  
 His knyhtis sente to brynge it to ruyne.  
 But thei echon for ther presumpcioun,  
 With sodeyn leuene wer smet & bete doun.  
 Wheroff Cambises, in Asie tho regnyng,  
 Hadde this drem as he lai slepyng.

1660 and when he  
 sent his knyghts  
 to rob Jupiter  
 Ammon, they  
 were suddenly  
 struck by  
 a thunderbolt.

1664

He drempte his brother, that called was  
 Mergus,

Sholde in the kyngdam afftir hym succede.  
 Wheroff in herte he wex so envious,  
 That he purposed, off rancour and hatreede,  
 Bi sum mene to make his sides bleede;  
 And that his purpos sholde take auail,  
 A magicien he took to his counsail.

[p. 165]

Cambyzes  
 dreamt that he  
 should be  
 succeeded by  
 1668 his brother  
 Smerdis and  
 consequently  
 resolved to kill  
 him.

1672

And he was holde a ful gret philisophre,  
 Callid Cometes, ful slehti and cunnyng,  
 To whom Cambises made a large proffre  
 Off gold and tresour to make hym assentyng  
 To execute this horrible thyng;  
 And that he wolde in most cruel wise  
 The moordre off Mergus compassen & deuise.

He took counsel  
 of a magician  
 called Gometes  
 and offered him  
 1676 great treasure  
 for Smerdis'  
 life.

1680

And whil Cambises ordeyned this tresoun,  
 To slen Mergus, his owne brother deere,  
 God from aboue caste his eien doun,  
 Hym to pun[y]she in ful cruel manere:  
 For he wex wood[e], who-so list to lere,  
 Cauht a sharp suerd, & roff his thih on tweyne;  
 And sodenli he deied for the peyne.

But God, who  
 saw what was  
 going on,  
 punished  
 Cambyzes with  
 death,  
 1684

For too causes God took on hym vengauce,  
 As myn auctour Bochas doth expresse:  
 For his presumptuous fals disobeisaunce,  
 Spoilyng the goddis off her gret richesse,  
 And for the froward gret onkynd[e]nesse  
 To yeue assent to the contagious caas,  
 Whan that Mergus his brother moordred was.

for two reasons:  
 because he  
 presumptuously  
 despoiled  
 the gods of their  
 great wealth,  
 and because of  
 his unkindness  
 to his brother  
 Smerdis.  
 1692

1662. it] om. H.

1675. Comeres P — and] of H.

1686. thih] teth H.

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War followed,  
and Persia stood  
disconsolate  
without an heir  
to the throne,  
although  
Gometes substi-  
tuted his brother  
Oropastes  
(Smerdis the  
Magian) for the  
murdered  
Smerdis.

The deth off whom was cheeff occasioun  
Off ful gret werre, stryues and debat, 1696  
Eek fynal cause whi al the regioun  
Off myhti Perse stood disconsolat:  
For heir was non, off hih nor low estat,  
Be title off riht, thoruh this onhappi chaunce, 1700  
To been ther kyng and ha[ue] the gouernaunce.  
For the magicien callid Cometes,  
Which slouh Mergus, as ye haue herd expresse,  
Took his brother callid Oropastes, 1704  
And made hym kyng, the stori berth witesse,  
Because that he resembled in liknesse  
Onto Mergus off face and off stature,  
To crowne hym kyng therfore he dede his cure. 1708

The death of  
Smerdis was not  
publicly known  
at first,

**T**HE deth off Mergus outward was nat knowe  
Nor pleyntly publisht in that regioun;  
His bodi buried and cast in erthe lowe.  
Off whom the moordre and fraudulent tresoun, 1712  
The pitous slaughtre wrouht be collusioun,  
And al the maner, bi processe was espied  
So openli it myhte nat be denyed.

but later on a  
prince named  
Otanes sought  
to find out all the  
circumstances  
of the case,

And in what wise the noise gan out sprede 1716  
Touchyng this moordre odious for to heere:  
Whan that Oropastes ocupied in deede  
The crowne off Perse, the stori doth vs lere,  
Ther was a prynter ful notable & enteere, 1720  
Callid Hostanes, that gan his witt applie,  
Off hih prudence this moordre out tespie.

believing that  
Oropastes had  
no just right to  
the crown.

Whil that Oropastes, vnder a fals pretence,  
Off Perciens was resseyued as for kyng, 1724  
The said[e] prynter dede his deligence,  
Bi inquisicioun to ha[ue] knowlechyng,  
Be what engyn or be what sleihti thyng  
The said Oropastes cauhte occasioun 1728  
In stede off Mergus to ocupie the crown.

1696. striffe R. 1697. whi] whi that R.  
1698. disconsolat] consolate R. 1700. this] his R.  
1701. kyng] heir R. 1702. Comares P.  
1711. erthe] therth H. 1717. for] om. H.  
1718. Oropastes J, R 3, P. 1721. Otanes P.  
1723. Oropastes J. 1724. receyued was H.  
1726. to haue] ta full H. 1728. Oropastes J.

On this mateer he hadde a coniecture,  
 That his title was nouthur hool nor cleer.  
 The trouthe to trie he dede his besi cure, 1732  
 And to serche out hooli the maneer,  
 He souht[e] so ferr that he cam riht neer,  
 And in this caas lettid for no slouthe,  
 Till that he hadde founden out the trouthe. 1736

The cas was this, pleynli to termyne:  
 He hadde a douhter, ful fair off hir visage,  
 Which off the kyng was cheuest concubyne,  
 Bi whom he thouhte to cachchen auantage. 1740  
 And onto hir he hath sent his massaige,  
 Secreli tenqueren how it stood,  
 Wher that the kyng wer come off Cirus blood.

Finally he  
 discovered the  
 truth through  
 his daughter,  
 who was the  
 king's chief  
 concubine.

And bad she sholde secreli taken heed, 1744  
 Whil that he slepte to doon hir besi peyne  
 With hir handis for to feele his hed,  
 And to grope afftir bothe his eris tweyne.  
 And yiff it fill — ther is no mor to seyne — 1748  
 Vpon his hed that she non eris founde,  
 To telle hir fadir, off trouthe as she was bounde.

He bade her  
 secretly feel the  
 king's head  
 while he slept  
 and see whether  
 he had ears or  
 not;

This myhti prynce Hostanes knew[e] weel, [p. 166]  
 Riht as it is recorded be scripture, 1752  
 Touchyng this caas how it stood euerideel,  
 How kyng Cambises off sodeyn auenture,  
 Bi his lyue for a forfeiture,  
 Made off Orapastes, the stori seith nat nay, 1756  
 Bothe his tweyne eris to be kit away.

for Otanes  
 knew that  
 Oropastes had  
 forfeited his ears  
 as a punishment  
 during Cam-  
 byses' reign.

And heerupon to be certefied,  
 He was desirous ta[ue] ful knowlechyng.  
 Which be his douhter whan it was espied, 1760  
 Vpon a nyht liggyng bi the kyng,  
 Gropyng his hed[e] as he lai slepyng,  
 Ful subtili felte and took good heed,  
 How he non eris hadde vpon his hed. 1764

It turned out  
 that the king  
 had no ears.

And to hir fadir anon she hath declarid  
 The secrenesse off this auenture.  
 And for no feer nor dreed he hath nat sparid,

So Otanes called  
 the princes of  
 Persia to a  
 council,

1731. nor] ne H.  
 1759. taful B.

1733. serche] seche R.  
 1766. this] his R.

1738. hir] om. R.

How that it stood[e] pleynli to discure. 1768  
 And first off all he dede his besi cure,  
 Alle the pryncis off Perse-lond ifeere  
 To counseil calle tentrete off this mateere.

at which he told  
 them about the  
 murder of  
 Smerdis.

And whan thei wern assemblid euerichon, 1772  
 Off Oropastes he told hem al the chaunce,  
 And how that Mergus was moordred yore agon,  
 As heer-toforn is put in remembraunce.

Wherupon to sette an ordynaunce 1776  
 And to redresse these wronges doon toforn,  
 Off Perse-lond wer seuene pryncis sworn.

Seven princes  
 were sworn to  
 dethrone  
 Oropastes.

Off oon assent in<sup>1</sup> ther entencioun,  
 Bi bond off oth thei made ther assuraunce, 1780  
 And a ful secre coniuracioun  
 To putte Oropastes from his roial puissaunce,  
 Which hadde al Perse vnder his gouernaunce  
 Bi a ful fals pretens off heritage, 1784  
 For he was lik to Mergus off visage.

They took their  
 swords with  
 them, and,  
 forcing their  
 way into the  
 palace, attacked  
 the king, but  
 were at first  
 held off by his  
 brother, who  
 slew two of them.

These seuene pryncis, off which toforn I tolde,  
 Alle off oon herte, & bi ther oth ibounde,  
 Prudent and manli and off yeris olde, 1788  
 Han souht a tyme Oropastes to confounde.  
 And with ther suerdis sharp[e] whet & grounde,  
 Wonder couert in ther appaile,  
 Cam off entent Oropastes to assaile. 1792

And in the paleis whom-euer that thei mette  
 Or ageyn hem made resistance,  
 Alle off accord thei fersli on hym sette.  
 But the magicien, that was ther in presence, 1796  
 Cam ageyn hem be sturdi violence,  
 And at thencountre gan hem so constreyne,  
 That off the pryncis thei haue islay[e]n tweyne.

[Oropastes occupyeng the crowne of Perce bi iniust  
 title was moordred.] <sup>1</sup>

At last they  
 prevailed and  
 killed Oropastes  
 and all who were  
 in the palace.

But fynali the tother pryncis fyue, 1800  
 Whan that thei sauh ther tweyne feeris bleede,  
 In al the paleis thei leffte non alyue.

1772. assemblid] assembled to gedre R. 1777. to] om. H.

1781. secre] sette R. 1786. These] The H.

1790. sharp whet swerdis & grounde R — I grownde H.

1791. Wonder] Vndir H. 1792. for tassaile H.

1793. the] that H. 1798. thencountre] thentre H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. inner margin 68 verso.

And kyng Orapastes, quakyng in his dreede,  
 Ful onwarli, or that he took heede, 1804  
 Was slay[e]n ther, guerdoned for al his myht, —  
 Off pretens kynges which regne & ha[ue] no riht.

[How Dary obteynnyng the kyngdam of perce be  
 sleiht eended with shame.]<sup>1</sup>

AFFTIR the deth of this magiciens  
 Was lefft no kyng to ha[ue] the gouernaunce, 1808  
 Nor for to reule the lond off Perciens,  
 Sauff pryncis fyue, ful famous off puissaunce,  
 Which made a statut and an ordynaunce  
 Off oon accord, be record off writyng, 1812  
 Theron concludyng who sholde be chose kyng.

After the death  
 of these magians  
 there was no one  
 to be king in  
 Persia save five  
 princes,

Ther sort, ther happe and al ther auenture  
 Was youe to Fortune off this eleccioun,  
 As thus: that prynce the crowne shal recure 1816  
 Among these fyue, be ther convencioun  
 For to gouerne the myhti regioun  
 And in that lond to regne & contune,  
 Lik as the fauour list ordeyne off Fortune. 1820

who agreed  
 to choose one  
 of themselves,

This was the statut: vpon a morwenyng,  
 Alle attonys erli for to ride  
 Atwen Aurora and Phebus vprisng,  
 Vp to an hill to houe[n] and abide,  
 Al rancour & discord set a-side, 1824  
 Whos hors among hem was first herd neieng,  
 Withoute gruchchyng sholde be crownyd kyng.

in the following  
 manner: to ride  
 out early in the  
 morning up a  
 hillside and to  
 elect him king  
 whose horse  
 neighed first.

Vpon this mateer what sholde I lenger tarie? — 1828  
 Heeron was maad an oth in sekirnesse.  
 Among these pryncis ther was on callid Darie,  
 A prynce off Perse excellyng off noblesse,  
 Which hadde a seruau[n]t, the stori berth witnesse, 1832  
 That kept his hors, & thouhte in verrai deede  
 He wolde his lord preferre at such a neede.

One of the  
 princes, whose  
 name was  
 Darius, had a  
 servant who  
 thought he  
 would help his  
 master win.

1810. fyue pryncis R.

1812. Off] And H. 1814. happis H. 1816. As] And R.

1821. mornynng H. 1824. houen] hove H, P — abide] ta-  
 bide H.

1825. discorde & rancour H. 1834. a] om. R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 68 verso.



So on the day  
before the con-  
test he let his  
master's horse  
come together  
with a mare on  
the same hill-  
side, and when  
they rode there  
the next day,  
nature caused  
the horse to  
neigh loudly.

The said seruant, ful sleihty in werkyng,  
His deligence list nothyng to spare.

[p. 167]

1836

The dai toforn[e] set off ther meetyng,

At a place smothe, pleyne and bare,

His lordis hors he made lepe a mare.

And on the morwe whan the pryncis mette

1840

On hors[e]bak, there his lord he sette.

And whan the hors thedir cam ageyn,

Nature anon afforced his corage

To neie loude vpon the same pleyne,

1844

Wher-as the mare had vsid hir passage.

Kynde in such caas hadde gret auauntage.

Be which[e] sleihte, pleyntly to reherse,

The said[e] Dary was crownyd kyng off Perse.

1848

The princes  
made no con-  
tradiction, and,  
dismounting  
from their  
horses, said to  
Darius, "Long  
live the King!"

The pryncis alle, lik ther convencioun,

Or Phebus shewed his firi bemys briht,

Withoute striff or contradiccioun

From ther hors sodenli aliht;

1852

And onto Dari, as lowli as thei myht,

Saide in Greek[e] or thei vp aros,

"*Policronitudo Basileos!*"

Which is in Latyn, to speke in wordes pleyne,

1856

And in Inglissh, bexpownyng off scripture,

Aftir the Greek, as moche for to seyn

As, "long[e] tyme mote the kyng endure," —

And lyue in helthe with good auenture,

1860

Bi the grace and fauour off Fortune

Vpon al Perse to regnen and contune.

It is remarkable  
that a man  
should rise to be  
king by such  
means; but when  
Fortune favours,  
no one can  
say nay.

Who list considren eueri circumstance,

It is a merueil nat groundid on prudence,

1864

Bi such a sleihte a kyng tagouernaunce,

Thoruh title or cleyrn as off iust euidence,

So to be reised to kyngli excellence.

But whan Fortune fauoureth such assay,

1868

Till that she chaunge, ther can no man sei nay.

1835. sleihty] sleuhty R. 1836. nothyng] nat R.

1837. by forn H. 1841. lord] horse H.

1850. his] hir H — fire R.

1855. Polycronitudo P.

1856. in] om. R.

1866. or] of R.

Thus was kyng Darie, born off louh lynage,  
 Set up be sleihte in estaat honorable.  
 Thouhte that he wolde for his auauntage,  
 To make his kyngdam & his regne stable,  
 Wedde such a wiff as to hym was most hable,  
 Demyng off trouthe his cleyrn wer weel amendid,  
 Off Cirus lyne yiff she were descendid.

As Darius was  
 not of high  
 lineage, he  
 married a  
 descendant of  
 Cyrus to  
 strengthen his  
 position.

1876

To wedde suchon was al his couetise,  
 Stable for to regne vpon the Persiens.  
 And, as I fynde, in ful cruel wise,  
 Bi the counseil off fals magiciens  
 A werre he gan vpon the Egipciens.  
 Eek folili he gan for to werreie  
 Them off Athenys, which list hym nat obeie.

and foolishly  
 made war on the  
 Egyptians and  
 the Greeks.

1880

And, as myn auctour maketh rehersaile,  
 He for his pride and fals presumpcioun  
 Was disconfited twies in bataile,  
 And neuer afftir, as maad is menciou,   
 He was nat had in reputacioun,  
 Mong Persiens so gan his honour fade.  
 With sleihte he gan; with shame an eende he made.

1884 He was beaten  
 twice in battle  
 and never  
 afterwards held  
 in respect by  
 the Persians.  
 He began with  
 deception and  
 ended with  
 shame.

1888

[How Corolian bi Romayns exilid gan werre ayenst  
 hem and how afftir thei sent out his moder with  
 othir for pees, which had, thei eft him exilid &  
 afftir was slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

A FFTIR this Darie, as I reherse can,  
 And myn auctour likith to conclude,  
 To Iohn Bochas cam Corolian,  
 The moste woful off al that multitude.  
 Which gan compleyne vpon thyngatitude  
 Off the Romeyns, how thei whilom in deede  
 Exilid his persone, off rancour & hatreede.

After Darius,  
 Coriolanus  
 appeared, com-  
 plaining how  
 the Romans had  
 exiled him,  
 although he had  
 never ceased to  
 labour for the  
 common profit.

1892

1896

Which in his tyme wolde neuer cese,  
 Thoruh his noblesse and his hih renoun,  
 Ther comoun profit tawmente and encrese,  
 And for to brynge to ther subieccioun  
 Many a cite and many a noble toun.

1900

1876. she] he R.

1893. Coriolan P. 1894. al] om. H.

1902. 2nd a] om. H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 69 recto.

Yit thei ageynward, for al his cheualrie,  
Han hym exilid off malice and envie.

1904

When he saw  
how unkind the  
Romans were,  
he went to the  
Tuscans and  
persuaded them  
to begin a war  
on Rome with  
his help.

But whan this Marcus, callid Corolian,  
Sauh off Romeyns the gret onkynd[e]nesse,  
Toward a cuntre that callid was Tuskan  
Off hih disdeyn anon he gan hym dresse,  
And hem entretid, off manli fell prowesse  
To gynne a werre, sithe thei so manli be,  
Thoruh his conveiang geyn Rome the cite.

1908

He told them  
that the Romans  
were torn by  
dissension and  
that they would  
win easily.

And for to put hem mor in assuraunce,  
To ha[ue] victorie thoruh ther hih renoun,  
He tolde hem pleynli off a gret distaunce,  
Off a fals striff and a discencioun

1912

That was off newe falle in Rome toun;  
Wherfor thei shulde, yiff it be provided,  
Conquere hem lihtli, because thei were deuided.

1916

He assembled a  
great Tuscan  
army, and when  
it arrived before  
the city the  
Romans were  
overcome with  
fear, which is  
always the  
case when a  
kingdom is  
divided.

Bi ther assent he made a gret arme,  
With stuff for werre richeli apparailed,  
Pihte his tentis tofor that strong cite,  
And in the feeld stood proudli [en]batailed.  
But the hertis off Romeyns han hem failed,  
And durst nat passe the gatis off ther toun,  
Ther was among hem so gret deuysioun.

[p. 168]

1920

Ther cite stood that tyme destitut,  
With feer supprised for lak off gouernaunce.  
Them to diffende thei fond[e] no refut,  
So ferr enfeeblisshid was ther old puissaunce.  
For euer gladli, wher striff & variaunce  
In any kyngdam haue an interesse,  
Touchyng diffence,\* a-dieu al hardynesse!

1928

1932

There can be  
no wise counsel  
where there is  
discord.

Withynne hemsilff[e] thei stood at debat;  
Afforn ther enmyes redi for tassaile;  
Confort was non in hih nor low estat:  
For wher discord is, what counsail mai auaille?  
Ther foon withoute, withynne hemsilff bataile,  
Brouht in, alas, to ther confusioun,  
Bi the fals serpent off discencioun.

1936

1906. Sauh] Sauff R.

1909. fell] hih R, hygh H 5.

1921. afforn H — strong] gret R.

1932. diffence] a diffence B, R, J.

1935. louh nor hih H.

1922. batailed J.

But at the laste afforced and constreyned,  
 Thei were coact[e] afftir pes to seeke.  
 The caas stood so: off nede thei wer peyned,  
 Maugre ther myht, ther hertis for to meeke.  
 And ther myscheeff mor tencrece and eeke,  
 In awmentyng off ther cruel fatis,  
 Thei sauh ther enmyes briht armed at ther gatis.

1940 So there was  
 nothing to be  
 done but sue for  
 peace.

Thei sent out first preestis off the toun  
 With ther enmyes for tentrete off pes,  
 With humble proffres & low subieccioun;  
 But Corolian, this is dout[el]les,  
 Ageyn the Romeyns was so merciles,  
 That grace non myht in his herte myne  
 To ther request his eris to enclyne.

1944  
 The Romans  
 first sent  
 out priests, but  
 Coriolanus  
 refused to listen  
 to them.

Thanne the Romeyns, the stori telle can,  
 To Venturia made ther praier,  
 Which was the mooder off Corolian,  
 And to Volumia, his feithful wiff enteer,  
 That thei sholde bothe gon ifeer  
 Onto that prynce, besechyng at the leste,  
 Benygneli to heryn ther requeste.

1952

1956 Then his  
 mother, and  
 Volumnia, his  
 wife, went to  
 him and begged  
 him to hear  
 their request.

His mooder first ful prudentli abraide,  
 Onto hir sone makyng this questioun,  
 At ther meetyng to hym thus she saide:  
 "Shal I," quod she, "for short conclusioun,  
 Off feithful herte and trewe affeccioun  
 To thi presence declare fynali,  
 Be now receyued as mooder or enmy?"

1960

Said his mother,  
 "Am I to be  
 received as  
 mother or  
 enemy?"

Afftir thyn answer I mut myselff dispose  
 And my wittis speciali applie,  
 Cause off my komyng cleerli to onclose,  
 And telle theeffect of myn ambassiatric,  
 And my speche so gouerne and guie,  
 Afftir I am receyued to thi grace,  
 Mi-silff declaryng, yiff I ha[ue] tyme and space.

1964

1968 "My action  
 must depend  
 upon your  
 answer.

For lik thi mooder yiff thou receyue me  
 And me accepte onto thi presence,  
 I mut therafftir so gouerned be  
 To telle my tale pleyntli, in sentence,—  
 So that thou yiff me freendli audience.  
 And yiff I be nat receyued in such wise,  
 Mor straung[el]li my tale I mut deuise."

1972

1976 "If you receive  
 me as a mother,  
 I will give you  
 the message of  
 the Romans in  
 simple words,  
 otherwise I must  
 tell my tale more  
 circumspcctly.

1980

1980. be nat] om. R.



Coriolanus embraced his mother and said, "Madam, I receive you as my dear mother, but I intend nevertheless to chastise the Romans for their ingratitude."

This noble prynce, this Corolian,  
Whan that he herde his mooder thus compleyne,  
Ful lik a lord and a knyhtli man 1984  
Gan hir enbracen in his armis tweyne  
In lowli wise, ther is no mor to seyne, —  
Sauf lik a sone, off due and off riht,  
To hire he saide ful lik a ientil knyht: 1988

"Madame," quod he, "be it to your plesauce  
To heere my conceit as in this mater.  
With feithful herte and humble attendaunce  
I you receyue as for my mooder deer; 1992  
But, & ye like benygneli to heer,  
Thyngratitude, doon in most cruel wise  
To me off Romayns, I purpose to chastise."

"Ah son," said she, "their offence can be atoned for; you are of their lineage; let mercy modify your rigour."

"A sone," quod she, "touchyng ther offence 1996  
Doon to thi noblesse and ther gret outrage,  
Thei shal be menys ther trespas recompence.  
And thynk[e] thou art born off ther lynage,  
And suffre that merci thi rigour mai asswage, 2000  
And thynk off nature thou maist nat weel withseie  
Thyng for the which thi mooder doth now preie.

"Do not begin a war against your country and destroy your own line in mortal strife!"

Thou shalt nat close thyn entrailes off pite [p. 169]  
To the requestis off me and off thi wiff, 2004  
Nor gynne a werre ageyn[e]s thi cuntre,  
To stroie thi lyne bi newe mortal striff,  
Thi childe and me to make vs lose our liff.  
Weie in ballaunce to Romayns thyn hatreede 2008  
Ageyns the loue off me and\* thi kenreede.

"Send your strange soldiers away, who are so ready to shed Roman blood. I will be hostage."

Send hom ageyn thi straunge soudiours,  
Which be so redi the Romayn blood to sheede;  
Lat stonde in pes our wallis and our tours; 2012  
Suffre thi grace thi rancour to exceede,  
So that thi pite mai putte awai al dreede,  
And condescende to receyue for hostage  
Me to be plegge for ther gret outrage. 2016

"Do not forget how I fed you at my breast when you were an infant,

Behold\* the wombe in which that thou wer born,  
And see also my naked brestes\* tweyne,  
Bi which thou were fostred heer-tofor:

1982. Coriolan P.

1989. to] *om.* R — your] yow H, R 3, you H 5.

2002. Thyng] Thynk R.

2008. in] in a H. 2009. and] and off B, H, R, J.

2017. Beheld B. 2018. brestes] sides B, R.

Yiff ther was lak, thou woldest crie & pleyne. 2020  
 Remembre theron, and at me nat disdeyne,  
 But onto merci receyue this cite  
 At the request heer off thi wiff & me.

Whilom my mylk thi cherisshyng was &\* foode 2024 and how often I  
 To stynte thi cri whan thou dedist weepe, woke to make  
 Ther soote dropis ful holsum wer & goode, you sleep.  
 Thi tendre youthe for to preserue and keepe. "Have mind on  
 And lik a mooder to brynge the a-sleepe, 2028 my request."  
 I wook ful offte, to the I was so kynde, —  
 Wherfor, deere sone, on my request ha[ue] mynde.

Yiff that thou list this cite now tormente,  
 Ther demerites be rigour recompense, 2032 "If you must  
 Pun[y]she me for them, and I will assente repay the faults  
 To ber the gilt off ther gret offence. of this city  
 But, deere soone, lat thi magnificence with severity,  
 Suffre off knyhtod that merci mai in deede 2036 punish me, who  
 Attempre thi riht, or thou to doom proceede. am willing to  
 bear the guilt."

Suffre Romayns to lyuen in quiete,  
 Graunt hem pes ageyn ther gret outrage,  
 Sum drope off pite lat in thyn herte fleete, 2040 "Grant peace to  
 And thynk[e] thou art born off ther lynage. the Romans,  
 Looke vpon hem with merciful visage, have pity on  
 Which offre hemsilff[e], as thei shal fulfille, your kindred  
 Ther liff, ther deth, al hooli at thi wille. 2044 who offer to  
 submit to you."

Remembre off nature how that the leoun  
 Set a-side his rage and his woodnesse  
 To them that meekli afor hym falle down;  
 His roial kynde will doon hem no duresse. 2048 "Remember  
 Texemplefe to thi knyhtli noblesse, how the lion  
 With rigerous suerd thou shalt no mor manace refuses to harm  
 Them that be lowli, yolde onto thi grace." those who fall  
 down meekly  
 before him."

And whan this prynce, this Corolian, 2052 Coriolanus  
 Had herd al that his mooder list to seyne, embraced his  
 He goth to hire in al the haste he can, mother weeping  
 Bespreynt with teris that on his chekis reyne, and at once  
 And hire enbracid in his armis tweyne, 2056 granted her  
 request.

2021. at] lat R.

2024. &amp;] &amp; thi B, H, R.

2036. merci] om. R.

And saide, "mooder, ther mai be no lettyng,  
Me off hool\* herte to graunte your axying."

He raised the  
siege, sent his  
Tuscans home  
and was received  
back into Rome  
with joy.

The siege he made for tauoide awai,  
And to reparaire hom to ther cuntre; 2060  
And with his mooder & wiff he was that dai  
With gret[e] gladnesse and solempnite  
Anon receyued into that cite,  
Lik as Fortune wolde hym neuer haue failed.\* 2064  
But she soone afftir off newe hath hym assailed.

But afterwards  
the fickle  
Romans  
banished him  
again, and he  
was then slain  
by the disap-  
pointed Tuscans.

The geri Romayns, stormy and onstable,  
Which neuer in oon stille koude abide, 2068  
Ageyn this prynce, most knyhtli and notable,  
For to conspire off newe thei gan prouyde,  
And ban[y]shed hym to Tuskan ther beside,  
Wher he was slayn withynne a litil space,  
For he the Romayns took affor\* to grace. 2072

[How Melciades duk of Athenys with smal noumbre  
venquysshed vj<sup>e</sup> M<sup>i</sup> perciens, and aftir bi his  
comonte that ay of custum desireth a chaunge  
of princes newe he was cheyned in prisoun and  
so deied.]<sup>1</sup>

Duke Miltiades  
of Athens

**A**MONG other that put hemsilff in pres  
For to bewaile ther greuous heuynesse,  
Cam off Athenys duc Meltiades,\*  
Which thoruh his manhod & famous hih prowesse, 2076  
And thoruh his knyhtli renommed noblesse,  
Lich as auctours his tryumphes list comende,  
Fauht many a bataile his cite to diffende.

fought many  
a battle in de-  
fence of his city,

And off [his] victories,\* as it is compiled, 2080  
For comoun profit off that noble town,  
Fauht with a tirant that was toforn exiled,  
Callid Hippias, which be fals tresoun

2058. off hool] hool off B, J, R.

2064. haue failed] assailed B. 2070. banyssh H — to] in H.

2072. took affor] affor took B, H, R, J.

2075. Melciades in B and other MSS., the common blunder of  
the copyists, c for t and vice versa.

2076. famous] om. R. 2077. renouned H.

2080. his] om. R — victoires B. 2082. afforne H, afor R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 69 recto.

Hadde to kyng Darie maad a suggestioun, 2084  
 Vpon Athenys, in al the haste he myhte,  
 To reise al Perse ageyn that toun to fihte.

Sexe hundred thousand acountid was the noun-  
 bre [p.170] and with ten thousand men  
 Off Persiens, armed in plate and maile, defeated  
 Them off Athenys be force to encoumbre, 2088 Hippias, an  
 Echon assemblid them proudli to assaile. exiled tyrant  
 But this duc for nothyng wolde faile, who led an  
 Meltiades, but knyhtli took his place: army of sixty  
 With ten thousand he met hem in the face. thousand  
 Persians.

For bothe he was riht manli and riht wis, 2092  
 And off his handis proued a good knyht.  
 Set vpon them with so prudent ays, Miltiades put  
 That thei off Perce, for al ther grete myht, them to flight  
 Wer foure tymes put onto the flyht four times,  
 Bi thilke duc, yiff I shal nat feyne, 2096  
 And bi the noblesse off other knyhtis tweyne. 2100

Themystodes icallid was the ton,  
 Which off his hand, as auctours list descryue,  
 Was in a feeld[e] prouyd on his fon  
 The manli[est] knyht in his tyme alyue.  
 Which thilke dai so proudli dede stryue  
 Geyn them off Perse, & such a slauhter make,  
 That fynali the feeld thei ha[ue] forsake. 2104  
 and with the  
 help of Themis-  
 tocles and a  
 knight called  
 Cynaegirus,  
 finally defeated  
 them.

Cynegirus, a knyht eek off ther toun, 2108  
 The same dai thoruh his cheualrie,  
 With bloodi suerd, as he wente vp & doun,  
 Withoute noubre in his malencolie,  
 Slouh Persiens, [as] bookis specefie, 2112  
 That for the tyme thei no refut cunne,  
 Sauff to ther shippis for dreed off deth thei runne.

2091. faile] falle H. 2092. but] om. R. 2093. he] om. H.

2094. For] om. R.

2095. knyht stuck in scribe's pen R.

2096. Set] Sep R.

2101. Themistocles P, as no doubt Lydgate wrote. The copyists  
 have perpetuated an early blunder of d for cl.

2102. handis H — auctours] bookes H.

2103. on] of H.

2104. manliest] manli J, R.

2106. Ageyn H.

2112. as] om. B, H, J, R, H 5, P.



Cynaegirus held  
fast the largest  
Persian ship  
with his right  
hand,

And ther he wrouhte a straunge gret mervail,  
As writ Bochas, affermyng in certeyne, 2116  
The\* grettest shipp that bar [the] largest sail,  
With his riht hand he gan it so restreyne,  
Lik as it hadde be fastned with a cheyne,  
Maugre Perciens, which dede hem sore greue, 2120  
That be no crafft thei koud nat make it meue.

and when the  
Persians cut  
off his right  
hand he held the  
ship with his  
left hand, and

But whan that thei non other refut wiste,  
Freli tescape[n] out off his daungeer,  
Till thei his riht hand heuh off bi the wriste. 2124  
But with his lefft hand he gan approche neer,  
And heeld it stille, an vnkouth thyng to heer,  
That he hadde force so gret a shipp to lette.  
But than, alas, his lefft hand off thei smette! 2128

after they had  
cut off his left  
hand, he held  
the ship fast  
with his teeth,  
while the Greeks  
slew 200,000  
Persians.

Yit maugre them, whan he ther malice seeth,  
Al-were-it so that he hadde lost ech hand,  
The shipp he heeld stille with his teeth,  
That thei ne myhte departe fro the land, 2132  
Lik as ther vessel hadde falle vpon a sand, —  
Causere that day, myn auctour doth reherse,  
Too hundred thousand wer slayn off them off Perse.

Cynaegirus  
then went mad,  
and Bochas  
tells no more  
about him.

And whan this synguler myhti champioun, 2136  
Cynegirus, most vnkouth off corage,  
Had doon this meruail, as maad is mencioun,  
Off verrai angwissh he fill into a rage:  
Lik a beeste furious and sauage 2140  
Ran a-boute, alas, for lak off mynde! —  
In Bochas book no mor off hym I fynde.

Miltiades'  
subjects con-  
spired against  
him in spite of  
his victory

But in this processe afftir I beheeld  
Ay how that Fortune can hir freendis faile: 2144  
For Meltiades, ledere off that feeld  
And gouernour off al that gret bataile,  
Causyng victoire, as maad is rehersaile, —  
Yit his peeple off malice and off ire 2148  
Ageyn his noblesse falsli gan conspire.

and put him in  
prison.

Thei off Athenys set hym in prisoun,  
And in cheynys myhtili hym bounde,  
Onkynd[elli] thei gaff hym this guerdoun, 2152

2117. 1st The] Ther B, H 5 — 2nd the] om. R, J, P.  
2119. as] om. R. 2128. thei] the R.  
2132. parte frome H. 2133. a] om. R.

For al the knyhtod [that] thei in hym founde.  
 Yit had he suffred many mortal wounde  
 In ther diffence and for ther libertees,  
 To saue ther lyues, ther toun & ther cuntrees.

2156

This was the eende off duc Meltiades,  
 Thoruh the constreynt off his stronge bondis.  
 Eek thei exilid the knyht Themystodes  
 Out off ther toun to lyue in straunge londis,  
 That was so worthi preued off his hondis:  
 To shewe the chaung and mutabilite  
 Founde in Fortune and eueri comounte!

2160

This was his  
 end; and  
 Themistocles  
 was banished.  
 Such is the  
 change of  
 Fortune!

## [Lenvoye.]

THE stormy trust off eueri comounte,  
 Ther geri corages & troublid constaunce,  
 In this tragedie men mai beholde & see,  
 Now vp, now down, as Fortune cast hir chaunce.  
 For thei off custum ha[ue] ioie & most plesaunce,  
 In ther desirs onstedfast and ontrewre,  
 To seen ech day a chaung off pryncis newe.

2164

Here men may  
 see how little  
 trust there is in  
 the people.  
 They are  
 forever wanting  
 a change of  
 princes.

Corolian off Rome, a cheeff cite,  
 Was ther protectour thoruh his myhti puissaunce:  
 Venquisshid ther enmies, set hem in surte,  
 Brouht in rebellis to ther obeisaunce.  
 But thei ageynward, off wilful variaunce  
 Ban[y]shed hym twies, & no cause knewe,  
 Sauff for to seen a chaung off pryncis newe.

[p. 171]

2172

Coriolanus, the  
 protector of  
 Rome, was  
 twice banished;

The knyhtli noblesse, the magnanymyte,  
 The policie, the prudent gouernaunce  
 Off Meltiades, duc off the cuntre,  
 Wher that Athenys is cheeff toun in substaunce, —  
 Whan he ther comoun gan most to auaunce,  
 The mor onkyndli, in honour that thei grewe,  
 Most thei wer besi to chaunge hym for a newe.

2180

Miltiades, a  
 very great man,  
 was set aside for  
 another;

2184

2153. that] *om.* J, R, H, P, H 5.

2165. Ther] the H — &amp;] &amp; ther H. 2166. this] his R.

2171. Coriolan P.

2178. *The first four words of 6th stanza preceding are written above this line H.*2180. the] that R. 2182. most] *om.* R.

2183. The] Ther R.

Themistocles,  
the sovereign  
knight of his  
time, was exiled.

Themystodes, hauyng the souereynte  
Off knyhtis alle that bar spere or launce,  
Duryng his tyme, — I tak no mor on me,  
For comparisouns doon offte gret greuaunce, — 2188  
Sexe hundred thousand he putte to vttraunce,  
Onto Athenys neuer founde ontrewē;  
Yit thei conspired his exil for a newe.

Nothing is  
stable, and  
especially the  
tenure of  
kings.

What thyng mai heer floure in felicite, 2192  
Or stonde stable be long contynuaunce  
In hih estatis outhur in low degre? —  
Now flowe, now ebbe, now ioie, now myschaunce,  
Afftir Fortune holdeth the ballaunce. 2196  
And speciali, fals, feynyng and ontrewē,  
Comouns desir a chaung off pryncis newe.

Noble Princes,  
do not forget  
this in your  
prosperity.

Noble Pryncis, in your prosperite,  
On sodeyn chaungis set your remembraunce, 2200  
Fresshnesse off floures, off braunchis the beute  
Haue ai on chaung a tremblyng attendaunce,  
In trust off comouns is no perseueraunce:  
As wynter [&] somer be dyuers off ther hewe, 2204  
So be thei dyuers in chaung off pryncis newe.

[Ho[w] xerxes kyng of Perce, for his ravyne and  
couetise was dismembrid in smale pecys.]<sup>1</sup>

Next Xerxes  
came before  
Bochas,  
weeping  
piteously.

UN-TOFOR\* Bochas, ful pitousli wepyng,  
For to declare his dedli heuynesse,  
Cam Xerxes next, that was of Perse kyng, 2208  
And gan compleyne his dool and his distresse.  
Which in thre thynges, his stori berth witnesse,  
And as the cronycle cleerli can vs telle,  
All othir pryncis in erthe he dede excelle: 2212

None other was  
of such high  
estate, so rich,  
or of so great  
dignity.

In hih estat was non so gret as he,  
Nouthur in richesse nor worldli habundaunce,  
Nor non that tyme off so gret dignite;  
For as it is iput in remembraunce, 2216  
He hadde al Perse vnder his obeisaunce,  
Nor neuer prynce, as auctours do concludē,  
Hosteied attonys with such a multitude.

2186. or] & H. 2189. vttraunce] variaunce R.  
2202. Haue ai] havyng H.  
2203 is repeated after 2200 H. 2204. &] om. H.  
2206. Un-tofor] And tofor B, R, J. P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 70 verso.

Space off fyue yeer he made his ordenaunce,  
 Seuene hundred thousand peeple he dede reise;  
 Dempthe off fals pride ageyn his gret puissaunce  
 Non ertheli power myhte countirpeise.

2220 His army  
 numbered  
 700,000. He  
 thought no  
 earthly power  
 could resist him.

But summe auctours alowe hym nat nor preise,  
 Because that he, peeplis to encoumbre,  
 Set al his trust to conquere with gret noumbre.

But manli pryncis han this opynyoun:  
 In multitude stondeh nat victorie;  
 For knyhtli prowesse off eueri champioun,  
 Which manli cast hem in armys to ha[ue] glorie,  
 Enprentid hath fix in his memorie,  
 Marcial tryumphes God ne doth nat shewe  
 In noumbres grete no rather than in fewe.

2228 But manly  
 princes know  
 that victory  
 does not depend  
 on numbers.

This said[e] Xerxes, be record off auctours,  
 Had also, in cronycles as I reede,  
 Thre hundred thousand straunge soudiours,  
 Withoutyn othir, that wern off Perse & Mede.  
 Which gan the erthe for to cure and sprede,  
 Dried ryuers wher thei dede atteyne,  
 Karff doun hillis and made valis pleyne.

2236 Xerxes also  
 had 300,000  
 alien  
 mercenaries.  
 His armies  
 covered the  
 earth and  
 levelled the hills  
 and plains.

This was cheeff conceit off his fantasies,  
 To haue al erthe vnder subieccioun;  
 Thouhte his power rauhte aboue the skies,  
 Off surquedie and fals presumpcioun:  
 For as he dempte in his opynyoun,  
 How in his poweer pleykli that it lai,  
 Fro God aboue the heuene to take awai.

2244 He desired to  
 have all the  
 world subject  
 to him: he  
 even believed  
 that he could  
 rob God of the  
 heavens; but  
 the Lord will  
 not suffer  
 tyrants to reign  
 long.

But thilke Lord that can the meeke enhaunse,  
 And from ther sees the proude putte doun,  
 A[nd] namli them that ha[ue] no remembraunse  
 To aduertise off wisdam and resoun,  
 To knowe the Lord, most myhti off renoun, —  
 The Lord off Lordis, which, pleykli to compile,  
 Will suffre tirantis to regne but a while.

2248

2252

And oon the merueile that euer I dede reede, [p. 172]  
 Grettest and vnkouth pleykli onto me,  
 Is how Xerxes, kyng off Perse and Mede,  
 For to shewe a special syngulerte,

2256 Xerxes made a  
 great bridge  
 from Asia to  
 Europe —

2222. gret] fals R.

2236. straunge] strong H. 2250. And namli] Anamly R.

2251. aduertise] aduersit H. 2252. renoun] resoun R.



Out off Asie, ouer the Grete Se,  
As seith myn auctour, whom I dar alegge, 2260  
Into Europe made a myhti bregge.

a marvel that  
some men  
perhaps will not  
believe—but  
things that  
seem impossible  
can nevertheless  
be accom-  
plished;  
Sum men paraunter will therat disdeyne,  
And seyn it is a merueile nat credible;  
Yit crafft in cas to such thyng mai atteyne, 2264  
Which bi nature semeth an impossible:  
And, as to me, it is a thyng odible,  
Thynges tenpugne, awtentik and olde,  
Which notable clerkis in ther daies tolde. 2268

and it is not nice  
to doubt the  
words of  
notable scholars.  
These newe men that han but litil seyn,  
Nouther expert in crafft nor in nature,  
For lak off resoun holde al such thyng veyn,  
Thouh that it be remembred in scripture. 2272  
For eueri meruail and eueri auenture  
Is\* straunge to hym, as I reherse can,  
That lakketh the cause wherof the ground began.

Xerxes also had  
possession of  
Egypt and  
prepared to  
make war on the  
Spartans,  
This said[e] Xerxes hadde eek possessioun, 2276  
Be the title off his fader Darie,  
Off al Egipt, as maad is menciou[n];  
But thei off Grece were to hym contrarie:  
Wherfor he caste no lenger for to tarie, 2280  
This proude prynce, but myhtili werreie  
Lacedemonoys, which wolde hym nat obeie.

whom  
Demaratus  
warned  
and supplied  
with information  
written on  
tablets beneath  
a smooth surface  
of wax.  
But oon that was callid Demaratus,  
Which off that cuntre hadde afor[n] be kyng 2284  
And was exilid, the stori tellith thus,  
That tyme with Xerxes in houshold abidyng,  
Which loued that lond, for al his exilyng,  
Gaff them warnyng, to saue hem fro myschaunce, 2288  
Off Xerxes poweer and al his ordenaunce.

He wrot hem lettres grauen in a table,  
All themprises\* off Xerxes, out off doute,  
Off al his stuff and peeple incomparable, 2292  
And off his noumbre and his gret[e] route.

2260. alegge] wele legge H. 2261. a] *om.* R, H.  
2262. ther at *parawntir* wil H.  
2265. an] *om.* R — impossible R. 2272. that] *om.* R.  
2274. Is] Is to B, J, R.  
2284. afore hadde R. 2285. And] he H — thus] vs R.  
2291. themprises] *thenterprises* B, R, J, H 5.  
2292. Off] & H. 2293. 2nd and] & of H, R 3.

The which[e] table curid was withoute  
 Ful\* subtili with wex iplanyd pleyne,  
 That off his sonde ther was no lettre seyn.

2296

Thus was thentent off Xerses first discurid  
 Onto the Grekis, and al his fel\* werkynge.  
 But in o thyng thei gretli wer assurid,  
 Off trust thei hadde bi expert knowlechyng  
 In Leonidas, ther noble famous kyng,  
 Which among Grekis, off prowesse & forsiht,  
 Was in tho daies holde on the beste knyht.

The Greeks  
 were captained  
 by Leonidas,

2300

Off cheualrie callid the lode-sterre,  
 The sunne off knyhtod, that shon so briht & sheene,  
 The berere up, bothe in pes and werre,  
 And strengest piler his parti to meyntheene,  
 The Grekis riht hand ther noblesse to susteene,  
 Charboncle off armys, merour off policie,  
 And surest capteyn a feeld to reule & guie.

2304 their best  
 knight,

2308

And as myn auctour remembreth in his book,  
 How in this cas he was nat rech[e]lles,  
 But in al haste foure thousand men he took,  
 To lette the weies and comyng off Xerses.  
 And bi an hill callid Termophiles,  
 Wher Persiens began first ther viage,  
 He knyhtli caste to stoppe ther\* passage.

2312 who led four  
 thousand men  
 to Thermopylae,

2316

And secreli espieng the comyng  
 Off kyng Xerses with strong apparaile,  
 He, lik a knyht, made no tarieng,  
 Ches out sexe hundred, armed in plate & maile,  
 Which in such cas myhte most auaile,  
 And in diffence and helpe off ther cuntre  
 Wolde rather deie than from the feeld to fle.

where he chose  
 six hundred of  
 the strongest,

2320

2324

And couertli thei took[e] ther loggyng,  
 And kept hem cloos, till it drouh to nyht.  
 And at ther dyner themsilff refresshyng,  
 So as thei sat, in steel armed briht,  
 The kyng abraide lik a manli knyht,

saying to them  
 as they sat at  
 their last meal  
 before the  
 battle,

2328

2294. curid] coverid H.

2295. Ful] For B — pleynd R. 2298. fel] fals B, J, R.

2303. Was hoolde in tho daies R.

2310. surest] fairest H.

2313. al] al be H. 2316. viage] visage R.

2317. ther] the B, H.

Into the feeld afor thei shulde gon,  
Riht thus he saide among hem euerichon:

"Sirs, dine well, "Sires," quod he, "now dyneth merili, 2332  
and like good And with good wyn afforceth your corage,  
warriors be pre- Lik goode knyhtis in purpos fynali,  
pared to sup at For liff nor deth nat turnyng your visage,  
night with the But off assent, cast in your passage, 2336  
gods of the As ye heer dyne now in especiall,  
nether world, To suppe at nyht with goddis infernall.

holding together This is to meene, ye shul your liff iuparte, [p. 173]  
without fear, As hardi knyhtis, proudli to prouide 2340  
Withynne the feeld assonder nat departe,  
But keep you cloos, & for no dreed deuide.  
Desir off worshepe make to be your guide,  
Your expert noblesse eternali tauaunce 2344  
Be quyk report off newe remembraunce.

and having in And hath this dai nothyng in memori[e],  
your hearts only Nouthur your richesse, your blood nor your kenreede,  
hope and good Sauff onli hope and good trust off victorie, 2348  
trust of victory. And hardi prowesse you to conducte and leede.  
And thynkith knyhtli what shal be your meede,  
With marcial palmys your renoun & your name  
In the hiest place set in the Hous off Fame. 2352

"Though you And thouh ye been but a fewe in noumbre,  
are but few in Lat in your hertis o thyng be fantasied:  
number, Whil dyuysioun doth you nat encoumbre,  
remember that Victorie in armys mai you nat be denyed; 2356  
so long as you For nothyng is to conquest mor applied  
stand united you Than trewe accord among your-silff to shewe,  
are invincible." Thouh ye in noumbre be [founde] but a fewe."

Comforted by By\* this counseil syngulerli notable, 2360  
these words, And be this kynges knyhtli\* good language,  
they fell on the Thei reconforted heeld themsiluen\* able  
Persians in their Ageyn ther fomen to holden ther passage.  
tents at eve, And first off all, off hertli proud corage, 2364

2339. is] *om.* H.

2342. you] *om.* R — you cloos] to gedir H.

2347. nor] *ne* R. 2349. conduct] conduyt H.

2359. founde] *om.* R, J — a] *om.* J.

2360. By] But B, But bi R, J.

2361. kynges knyhtli] knyhtis kyngli B, R, J.

2362. themsiluen] themsilff B.

The Perciens mor mortali to greue,  
Withynne ther tentis thei fill on hem at eue.

Thei off Perce idrownyd were with wyn;  
This to seyen,\* thoruh ther gret excesse  
Thei lai and slepte lik as dronke swyn,  
Ther wach nat kept: loo, how that dronkenesse  
Causeth offte, off verrai reklesnesse,  
Ful many a man, that wil nat take keep,  
For to be moordred anyhtis in ther sleep.

2368 when, drowned  
in wine, they lay  
unguarded and  
sleeping.

And as this kyng dede his knyhtis leede,  
The Percien tentis assailyng sodenli,  
Or thei wer war or token any heede,  
Them for taffraie thei made an hidous cri.  
Diffence was noon vpon ther parti;  
For men mai knowe bi olde experience,  
In folkis dronke mai be no resistence.

2372

With a hideous  
cry they rushed  
on

2376

Out off noumbre thei slown off ther foon,  
And cased nat off al the longe nyht,  
Till on the morwe that the sunne shoon,  
That to beholde it was an ougli siht.  
And proude Xerxes put anon to fliht —  
Euer the laste that wolde his foon assaile,  
And ay the firste that fledde in bataile!

2380

and slew  
without ceasing  
all the long  
night.

2384

In his fliht so faste awei he ran,  
For theryn was hooli al his trust! —  
And off gret trauaile anon this Xerxes gan  
Off coward dreed to han so gret a thrust,  
So drie he was, off salt sond and off dust.  
And bi the weie serchyng ferr nor neer,  
He nouthur fond welle nor reuer.

2388

Proud Xerxes  
fled as fast as he  
could, and,  
overcome by  
thirst,

2392

Off auenture a meri ground he fond,  
The water trouble and bloodi off colour;  
And Xerxes ther drank water with his hond,  
Hym to refresshe in his dedli labour.  
And, as he thouhte, he neuer drank licour  
To hym mor holsom, so streiht[e] stood the caas, 2400  
Confect with spices, pyment nor ypocras.

2396 drank blood-  
stained water  
from a marsh.

2368. bis is H — seyne B. 2370. Ther] The R.

2385. proude] om. H — to] to the H.

2393. nor] or H, and P, R 3. 2394. nor] ne H, R 3.

2395. meri] myry H, R 3, miry P, mery J, R, H. 5.

2401. nor] or H.



This was his  
first defeat,  
from which men  
may see that  
Fortune has no  
respect for the  
great possessions  
and might of  
princes who  
refuse to know  
God.

This was the firste myscheeff and the dreed  
In which that Xerses, the myhti prynce, stood.  
Heer men mai see, such as list take heed, 2404  
How geri Fortune, furious and wood,  
Wil nat spare, for richesse nor for good,  
Mihti pryncis, which list nat God to knowe,  
From ther estatys to brynge hem doun ful lowe. 2408

With new  
presumption  
Xerxes proposed  
to rob the  
temples of the  
gods,

¶ O hatful serpent of hih presumpcioun,  
Ay onstaunchable with gredi vsurpyng,  
Be newe trouble, off fals sedicioun,  
Which list off pride receyue no warnyng: 2412  
For now Xerses, off Perse & Mede kyng,  
Purposid hath with odious apparaile  
The temple off goddis contagiously tassaile.  
For as hym thouhte, it myhte nat suffice, 2416  
To gret exauple off his outraious pride,  
How heer-toforn God dede hym chastise  
Bi manys hand, to sette his pompe a-side.  
But now off newe he gan ageyn provide, 2420  
Bi sacrilege his myhti hand to dresse,  
To spoile Appollo and reue hym his richesse.

and sent four  
thousand men

Ther was in Delos a temple thilk[e] dai, [p. 174]  
Most statli bilt and set up be masouns, 2424  
Gret ymages, reliques, riche arai  
Off gold and stonys in sundri mansiouns;  
And ther Appollo to sundri questiouns  
Gaff redi answeere, the stori tellith thus, 2428  
And he was callid Appollo Delphicus.

to pillage the  
shrine of the  
Delian Appollo.

Four thousand men Xerxes thedir sente,  
Bi his auys chose out for the nonys, 2432  
Ful clenli armed; & as thei thedir wente  
To spoile the temple off gold and riche stonys,  
With sodeyn leuene thei wer brent, flessch & bonys,  
With tempest, thunder, hail & hidous reyn  
Consumpt echon and neuer afftir seyn. 2436

But great Appollo  
in his indignation  
consumed them  
with lightning.

The grete Appollo, which shyneth briht in heuene,  
Hadde off this Xerses gret indignacioun,  
Which made his peple be consumpt with leuene,

2406. nor] ne R. 2408. to] om. H.  
2417. outraious] contrarious R.  
2428. answers R. 2434. thei] the R.  
2435. tempest] om. H. 2439. be] to be H.

In cruel punshyng off his presumpcioun.  
Yit he purposed, to his confusioun,  
Sithe on the lond he nothyng myhte wynne,  
Vpon the se a werre to begynne.

2440

Gan to make so gret an ordenaunce,  
That his naueie couered al the se:  
Yit Neptunus thouhte hym nat tenhaunce,  
Withynne his\* boundis to ha[ue] no liberte;  
For Themystodes with a smal meyne,  
Beside a cite callid Salamyne,  
Hym & his shippis brouhte onto ruyne.

2444 Xerxes next  
began a war on  
the sea, but his  
ships were  
scattered by  
Themistocles  
at Salamis,

2448

Yit, as I fynde, this proude kyng Xerxes  
Hadde on his parti Themydora, the queene  
Off Halcarnois, which put hirselff in pres,  
Armed in platis that shon ful briht and sheene.  
And thenarme off Xerxes to susteene,  
This womman fauht[e] lik a fell woluesse,  
And many Greek that dai she dede oppresse.

2452 although he was  
aided by the  
queen of  
Halicarnassus,  
who fought like  
a she-wolf.

2456

It was a straunge merueil for to heere,  
To seen a woman so sturdi off visage;  
Yit men expert aldai may seen and lere,  
Thei be bi nature ful cruel off corage,  
And no cowardis founde off ther language.  
Sett at assai, and thanne it shal be seene,  
Wher thei be feerful ther quarel to susteene!

2460 It was a strange  
thing: yet every  
day men may  
see that women  
are no  
cowards,— at  
least, of their  
words.

2464

Thei mai off meeknesse shewe a fair pretense, —  
Sum serpent is off colour siluer sheene,  
And summe floures, ful fressh off apparensse,  
Growe on thistles rouh[e], sharp and keene,  
And summe that been angelic to seene,  
And verai heuenli, with ther golden tressis,  
Been at a preeff[e] verrai leonessis.

Some serpents  
gleam like  
silver, bright  
flowers grow on  
thistles, and  
some women  
who look like  
angels are on  
occasion  
veritable  
lionesses.

2468

To seyn the sothe, a poore man mai be shent, —  
I dar no mor[e] speke off this mateere. . . .  
But kyng Xerxes, for al his proude entent,  
Al his naueie and his peeple ifeere  
Wer put to fliht & outraied off ther cheere.

2472 But as a poor  
man may be  
ruined for tell-  
ing the truth,  
I'll say no more.  
King Xerxes  
himself was  
badly wounded,

2476

2445. naueie] name R.

2447. his] hir B, H, J, hyr H 5, her R.

2455. And thenarme] The armye P.

2461. Thei be bi] Thai beenz of H, bei be of R 3.

2462. off] at H. 2464. quarellis H.

2448. Themistocles P.

Ther shippis drownyd among the wawes rude,  
That non abod off al that multitude.

but again he  
summoned his  
forces against  
the Greeks.

Kyng Xerxes hurt and woundid mortali,  
Onnethe he myhte the grete peyne endure; 2480  
His quakyng herte quit hym so cowardli, —  
On se and lond such was his auenture.  
And yit ageyn his damages to recure,  
Thre hundred thousand off fihteres he gan call, 2484  
Vpon Grekis off newe for to fall.

Themistodes,  
knowing what  
a coward he  
was, informed  
him that his  
bridge was  
broken,

A myhti duc callid Mardonyus  
Was capteyn maad his peeples for to leede;  
But Themystodes, myn auctour tellith thus, 2488  
Knowyng off Xerxes the cowardise & dreede,  
A lettre made for to be sent in deede,  
Enfourmyng hym, bi Grekis gret outrage  
How off his bregge was broken the passage. 2492

and Xerxes fled  
in a boat with  
one servant,

Off which[e] merueil whan ther cam tidyng  
To kyng Xerxes, he afftir anon riht,  
As he that was aferd[e] off ech thyng,  
Ful lik a coward took hym to the fliht. 2496  
Fledde in a boot, lik a coward knyht,  
Off al his peeples ther wer no mo iseyn  
Tawaite vpon hym, sauff a chaumberleyn.

his army  
dispersed and  
dying of  
privations.

Al his peeples departed heer and yonder, 2500  
Standyng in myscheff and gret indigence;  
To many a coost thei wente and rood asonder,  
Pyned with hunger, lakked ther dispence,  
Punshed also with onwar pestilence, 2504  
Feeble off trauaile myhte nat endure  
For impotence to karien ther armure.

The roads were  
full of dead  
bodies, the soil  
stained with  
blood and the air  
polluted.  
Ravenous fowls  
fed upon the  
corpses.

Alas ech wai[e] lai ful off careynes; [p. 175]  
The soil with blood[e] steyned & the greene; 2508  
The hair terrible off pathes & off pleynes,  
That no man myhte endure it nor susteene,  
The sauour was so odious and oncleene.

2485. off] *om.* R. 2488. thus] *vs* R. 2490. be] *om.* H.

2498. wer] *was* H. 2499. sauff] *but* H.

2502. rode & went R. 2503. payned H.

2508. steyned] *soiled* H.

2510. That no man myht] *bat men myht nat* H — myht  
endure it] *myht it endure* R.

2511. The] *ther* H — sauour] *fauour* R — and] & *so* R.

- Raueynous foulis, ful homli in ther siht,  
 Themself to feede vpon the corps aliht. 2512
- Thre hundred thousand off Perciens wer slayn,  
 Which Mardonyus afor ful proudli ladde.  
 Off which[e] tidying kyng Xerxes was nat fayn, 2516  
 But for distresse and sorwe gan to madde.  
 An[d] oon the laste myscheeff that he hadde,  
 Was whan Thymon, a noble Grekissh knyht,  
 Xerxes disconfited & put his men to fliht. 2520
- This Thymon was sone to Meltiades,  
 His fadir whilom off Athenes kyng,  
 Which last off all outraied hath Xerxes, —  
 Sauff off his eende ther fill a-nother thyng: 2524  
 Artabanus, ful sleihty in werkyng,  
 Which to Xerxes was nat suspect in deede,  
 Compassid his deth, in Bochas as I reede.
- This Artaban was prouost off his hous  
 And an officer most especial, —  
 With his seuene sonys strong & despitous,  
 Vpon a nyht furious and fatal,  
 Fill vpon Xerxes in his paleis roial. 2528  
 And in his stori as it is remembrid,  
 On pecis smale thei han hym al dismembrid.
- This was off Xerxes the laste fynal meede,  
 Off his hih pride the funeral guerdoun;  
 From his too kyngdamys off Perse & [eek] Mede 2536  
 Froward Fortune hath hym plucked down.  
 What mai auaile the dominacioun  
 Off such pryncis as holde hemseluen evene 2540  
 For to been egal with goddis hih in hevene?
- Men list nat knowe such chaunges for no preeff,  
 A[nd] namli pryncis in ther gret puissaunces.  
 Geyn ertheli pereiles & al worldli myscheeff 2544  
 Thei can provide hem & set\* ordynaunces,  
 As thei that dreede Fortunis variaunces;  
 But to Godward thei take litil heede,  
 For the gret richesse which thei do possede. 2548

Three hundred  
 thousand  
 Persians were  
 slain,

and Timon, son  
 of Miltiades,  
 completed their  
 discomfiture.

Not long after,  
 Artabanus and  
 his seven sons  
 fell upon Xerxes  
 in his palace and  
 slew him.

Thus ends the  
 lordship of  
 princes who  
 consider them-  
 selves equal to  
 the gods in  
 heaven.

They take little  
 heed to God,  
 although careful  
 enough to guard  
 themselves  
 against worldly  
 mischance.

2513. aliht] lihte H. 2517. to] forto R.  
 2519. Cymon P — grekis R. 2521. Cymon P.  
 2523. hath] om. R. 2529. speciall H.  
 2537. eek] om. J, R 3, eke of P, eek of H 5.  
 2543. And] A R — gret] om. R, J.  
 2545. set] settyn B. 2548. richesse] myscheff H.



If they hear  
of an earth-  
quake they flee,  
and if a

Yiff thei mai heren off an erthe-quauwe  
Toform it falle, or any tokne see,  
Than will thei gon anon themsilff to saue  
Out off ther houses, & from ther toun[e]s flee, 2552  
To putte ther liff the mor in surete,  
List ther beeldyng, maad off gret costage,  
Fill vpon hem in that mortal rage.

horse run away  
they will put  
him under a  
padlock, but  
small care do  
they take of  
their own souls.

Or yiff an hors ronne out off his stable, 2556  
Breke his coleer thikke, double & long,  
Men will ordeyne a lok off iren able  
To keepe hym in, be he neuer so strong.  
And thus men can redressyn eueri wrong 2560  
Touchyng the bodi, bi gret avisynesse;  
Sauf for the soule thei will nothyng redresse.

If a river  
overflows its  
banks they  
endeavour to  
change its  
course,

Whan a ryuer passeth ferr his boundis,  
Boilith vpward, fynt no resistence, 2564  
Wynneth land & ouerfloweth groundis,  
Drowneth toun[e]s with his violence, —  
Yit men will trauaile to fynden a diffence;  
To turne his cours sum weie shal be souht, 2568  
But toward God men thynke lite or nouht.

and against  
illness they use  
all manner of  
medicines, but  
to God they look  
for no remedy.

Ageyn siknesse men seeke medicynes,  
Letuaries and dyuers pocious, 2572  
Serche in phesik sundri disciplynes  
Them to diete in ther transgressiouns,  
Restoratyves and eek confeccious,  
But onto Godward, in this present liff,  
Men nat trauaile for no confortatiff. 2576

They will  
undergo the  
utmost fatigue  
and hardship to  
win treasure and  
put their lives  
in peril for  
things that are  
transitory,

Men ther bodies will putten in distresse  
Off fals desir and coueitous feruence,  
Onli tacroche and wyne gret richesse, 2580  
Suffre cold, labour and violence,  
And nouthre spare for gold nor for dispence  
To vndirfonge pereilles\* off veynglorie,  
Onli for thynges that be transitorie.

sailing by  
unknown seas  
and fighting  
many a battle;

Ther passe mounteyns & many hidous roche, 2584  
In hope it sholde to ther entent auaile,  
To many mortal monstre thei approche,

2549. an] one R. 2550. toknes H. 2552. housen H.  
2562. redresse] dresse H.  
2575. this] his R. 2581. 2nd for] om. H.  
2582. pereilles] peynes B.

And be many vnkouth se thei saile,  
Iuparte ther liff in werre and in bataile, 2588  
Be many daunger & many streiht thei ride  
For worldli tresour, which shal no while abide.

But toward goodis that be perdurable, [p. 176] but towards  
Ful lite or nouht ther hertis thei enclyne; 2592 eternal pos-  
Nor to the heuenli cuntre most notable, sessions they  
Thei wil nat lefft up nouthur hed nor chyne, — never look.  
Toward the speeris off Phebus & Lucyne,  
Castyng ther stremys to vs fro so ferre, 2596  
Which to considre all worldli men doon erre.

What myhte auaile the grete couetise  
Off kyng Xerxes in [his] estaat roial?  
Or the gret peepel, which ye han herd deuise, — 2600  
Ten hundred thousand; — the peepel was nat smal.  
But, for al that, he hadde an hidous fal,  
Whan that he was, as is toform remembrid,  
On pecis smale pitousli dismembrid. 2604

Of what avail  
was the  
ambition of  
Xerxes! What  
did his million  
men ac-  
complish?

### ¶ Lenvoye.

**T**HIS tragedie put vs in remembraunce  
Off thonsekir flatryng & blyndnesse  
Bothe off Fortune & off hir variaunce,  
And off hir ougli froward doubilnesse,  
In Xerxes shewed, for al his gret riches, —  
To vs declaryng, pleyntli in figure,  
A raueynous prynce mai no while endure.

This tragedy  
brings before  
our minds the  
blindness and  
fickleness of  
Fortune, as  
shewn to  
Xerxes, for all  
his great  
riches.

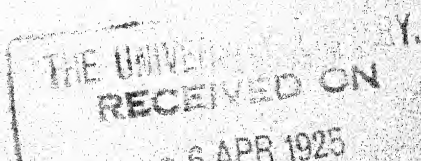
Kyng Xerxes hadde vnder his obeisaunce  
Al Perse & Mede, the stori berth witnesse;  
Thouhte al erthe to lital in substaunce  
To staunche the etik off his gredynesse, 2612  
A frett off hauyng put hym in such distresse.  
Whos fyn declarid, bi record off scripture,  
A raueynous prynce mai no while endure. 2616

He thought the  
whole world too  
small for him  
to possess,

He made also an odious ordenaunce,  
Off surquedie his powerer for to dresse,  
To robbe the goddis, maugre ther puissaunce,  
And spoile ther templis, off froward wilfulnesse,

and in his pride  
he attempted to  
rob the temples  
of the gods;

2593. cuntre] company R. 2596. fro] frome H — so] om. R.  
2600. ye] om. R. 2603. is] om. R. 2609. grete] om. R.  
2621. the] ther R.



Take ther tresours ageyn al rihtwisnesse.  
 But thei hym shewed, off sodeyn auture, 2624  
 A raueynous prynce mai no while endure.

but great Apollo  
 took vengeance,  
 and God will  
 not suffer such  
 men to last long.

Grete Appollo took on his men vengauce  
 With onwar tempest, for al ther sturdynesse,  
 Leuene and thunder brouht hem to myschaunce, 2628  
 Guerdoun most hable ageyn ther gret falsnesse, —  
 In pryncis hertis, pleyntli to expresse.  
 Who be raueyne richessis will recure,  
 God wil nat suffre hym longe to endure. 2632

Noble Princes,  
 think often of  
 the fall of proud  
 Xerxes; avoid  
 robbery and  
 ravin, and you  
 shall endure.

Noble Pryncis, stable in your constauce,  
 Ye that desire to stonde in sekirnesse,  
 Remembreth offte vpon the fatal chaunce 2636  
 Off proude Xerxes and his cursidnesse,  
 Your-silff disposyng in your hih noblesse,  
 Yiff that ye list your statis to assure,  
 Escheweth raueyne & ye shal longe endure!

[How Artabanus moordred kyng xerxes and how  
 aftir himsilf was moordred.] <sup>1</sup>

Bochas would  
 have put aside  
 his pen, had  
 not Artabanus,  
 the murderer of  
 Xerxes,  
 appeared before  
 him.

**N**EXT these tragedies, wepyng & dolerous, 2640  
 Whil Bochas stynte, & wolde ha been in pes,  
 A knyht appered callid Artabanus,  
 Which hadde afor[n]e moordred kyng Xerxes;  
 And gan his compleynt for to putte in pres, 2644  
 Ful concludyng, to speke in wordes pley[n],  
 Who vseth moordre, bi moordre he shal be slayn.

Artabanus,  
 Xerxes' provost,

This Artabanus, be record off writyng,  
 With Xerxes prouost whilom, as I reede, 2648  
 Falsli conspired be sleihte off his werkyng,  
 For to be kyng bothe off Perse & Mede,  
 Hauyng seuene sonys, which that wer in deede  
 Worthi knyhtis, manli and riht strong, 2652  
 Al-be ther fader was set to do gret wrong.

presumed to  
 usurp the throne  
 of Persia, and  
 after Xerxes'  
 death

For he presumed bi vsurpacioun,  
 In Perse and Mede to quench the cleer[e] liht,  
 And trouble the lyne off iust successioun: 2656

2629. hable] *om.* H — ageyn] geyn J, gein P.  
 2631. richesse R. 2636. his] of his R.  
 2640. dolorous H.  
 2641. Whil] Whan R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 73 recto.

For so as he off force and nat off riht,  
 Nothyng rasemblyng to a trewe knyht,  
 The moordre off Xerses falsli dede ordeyne,  
 Riht so he caste to moordre his sonys tweyne. 2660

And to conclude pleykli and nat tarie,  
 The said[e] kyng that callid was Xerses,  
 Hadde too sonys, the yongest callid Darie,  
 And the tother named Artaxerses, 2664  
 Which, as the stori reherseth dout[el]les,  
 Wer be discent bor[e]n for to succeede,  
 Afftir ther fader to regne in Perse & Mede.

sought to  
 kill his two sons,  
 Darius and  
 Artaxerxes.

The moordre off Xerses outward was nat knowe, 2668  
 Nor how Artabanus hadde the tresoun wrouht,  
 Till afftirward withynne a litil throwe  
 He hadde off newe forged out & souht  
 Fals odious treynes that wer neuer thouht: 2672  
 Tolde Artaxerses, as he gan with hym rowne,  
 How Darie caste to ocupie the crowne,

He told Artaxerxes that  
 Darius had set  
 his mind on  
 occupying the  
 throne,

And how the deth off Xerses was ordeyned [p. 177]  
 Onli be Darie and be noon othir wiht. 2676  
 Wherupon, which auhte be compleyned,  
 Artaxerses prouyded anon riht  
 The slaughtre off Darie; & so, ageyn al riht,  
 This yonger brother in his innocence 2680  
 Was falsli slayn, and dede non offence.

and that he  
 had been the  
 cause of his  
 father's death  
 and was also  
 plotting to kill  
 his brother.

Ye wete, be whom this tresoun was compassid,  
 Twen brethre tweyne to make dyuysioun,  
 The yonger slayn, & nothyng hath\* trespassid, 2684  
 Most redi were to the destruccioun  
 Off Artaxerses; for in conclusioun,  
 Whan the brethre moordred wer in deede,  
 Artabanus thouhte to succeede. 2688

As a result,  
 Darius was  
 slain in his  
 innocence.

But Artaxerses, be pleyn instruccioun  
 Off oon that callid was\* Baccar[i]us,  
 Be toknys kneuh the couert fals tresoun

Artaxerxes  
 was informed of  
 Artabanus'  
 treason,

2668. Xerse H. 2672. neuer wer R. 2673. Artaxerses H.

2677. auhte] ouht to H. 2680. yonger] yonge R.

2682. wite R, wote H.

2684. yonger] younger brothir R — hath nothyng B — hath  
 had R.

2688. for to H.

2690. was callid B, R — Baccaryus H 5, Baccabassus P.

2691. kneuh] know R.



- Off this forsaid double Artabanus, 2692  
 And how that he be treynes outraious  
 Hadde Xerses slayn, as ye han herd toform,  
 And Darie appechid, wherbi that he was lorn.
- and sought to  
 bring him to  
 reckoning.  
 But as he was  
 not powerful  
 enough to do  
 this alone, But off this vnkouth straunge tresoun wrouht, 2696  
 Whan Artaxerses hadde knowlechyng,  
 Bi gret auys weies he hath souht,  
 Artabanus to brynge to rek[e]nyng.  
 But speciali he dradde hym off o thyng: 2700  
 He feeble was to brynge this thyng aboute,  
 Off his seuene sonys he stood in so gret doute.
- he commanded  
 all the worthies  
 of Persia to come  
 in haste, But for tacomplisshe fulli his entent  
 Ful secreli, this was his ordenaunce: 2704  
 To all the worthi he hath his lettres sent,  
 Duellyng in Perse vnder his obeisaunce,  
 Withoute excus or lenger attendaunce,  
 Armed echon, and in especial 2708  
 To come in haste onto his court roial.
- armed to his  
 court. No one  
 knew his  
 purpose. Cause off ther komyng was to hem nat knowe,  
 The kynges purpos was holden so secre  
 And kept so cloos, bothe from hih & lowe, 2712  
 That to his menyng no man was pryve,  
 Except the kyng saide he wolde see  
 What noumbre off men, yiff it cam to neede,  
 In his diffence he myht[e] gadre\* and leede. 2716
- Among others,  
 Artabanus  
 came, armed  
 only in mail. And among other cam Artabanus  
 Onto the court, and list nat for to faile, —  
 A man that was cruel and coraious,  
 Ful off sleihtis in al his gouernaile, 2720  
 Which thilke tyme armyd was in maile;  
 For he with hym non other armour ladde,  
 Sauff on his bak an haberioun he hadde.
- To him  
 Artaxerxes said,  
 "My coat of  
 mail is too short,  
 I should like to  
 exchange  
 habergeons with  
 you." Thanne Artaxerses, beyng in his strengthe, 2724  
 To hym abraide off fals affeccioun:  
 "For that my maile wantith off his lengthe,  
 I wolde with the chaunge myn haberioun."  
 The tother hauyng noon euel suspeccioun, 2728  
 Ongirt hymself[e], wolde no lenger bide,  
 Bothe suerd & dagger cast hem ferr a-side.

2702. stood in] hadde R, J, had P.

2711. so] om. R. 2712. frome both H. 2716. gadrede B.

2717. And] om. R. 2724. beyng] kyng R — his] om. H.

And whil that he threuh off his haberiou, 2732  
 And with the maile stoppid was his siht,  
 He beyng naked, for short conclusioun,  
 The kyng out pullith a suerd[e] keene & briht;  
 And thoruh the herte he rooff hym anon riht.  
 And afftir that, off indignacioun 2736  
 Took his seuene sonys & cast hem in prisoun.

And as  
 Artabanus drew  
 his habergeon  
 off over his  
 head, Artaxerxes  
 stabbed him to  
 the heart with  
 his sword.

Off ther eende what sholde I mor endite,  
 Nor off ther deth make a digressioun?  
 God mai his vengauce a while weel respite, 2740  
 But moordre will out, & al such fals tresoun.  
 And for Artaban hadde a condicioun,  
 Falsli to moordre, as ye toforn ha[ue] seyn,  
 With onwar moordre he guerdonyd was ageyn. 2744

Thus murder is  
 punished with  
 murder,

Thus euer moordre requereth for his wages  
 Schlaundre inportable, odious for to heere, —  
 A woord diffamous, most foul in al languages,  
 The soun horrible bi report to appeere, 2748  
 A clips duryng, whos dirknesse may nat cleere;  
 For this woord moordre, most ougli & onfair,  
 Bi a rehersyng infectith al the hair.

and there is no  
 word more foul  
 in any language;  
 its spoken sound  
 infects all the  
 air.

[Off duk Palantus, and Spartenois werred them of  
 Missene for rauyssing their maidenens.]<sup>1</sup>

A FFTIR the deth[e] and [the] fatal cas 2752  
 And pitous moordre off Artabanus,  
 Next in ordre appered to Bochas  
 A myhti duc, callid Palantus,  
 Sone off a knyht Inamed Arathus. 2756  
 Which was exiled, thouh he no tresoun mente,  
 Out off his cite, that callid was Tarente.

Next in order  
 appeared  
 Phalanthus, son  
 of Aracus, who  
 was exiled from  
 Tarentum.

Vpon his exil he sore gan compleyne, [p. 178]  
 Besechyng Bochas to getyn hym a space 2760  
 Withynne his book, to write his greuous payne,  
 Al-be that he whilom stood in grace

Fortune raised  
 him from a poor  
 knight to the  
 estate of duke

2732. his] be H. 2734. pullith] plukkith H.

2738. Off] And of H. 2739. a] om. H. 2740. weel] om. R.

2741. fals] om. R. 2746. Importable H — for] om. H.

2752. the] om, H, R, J, R 3, H 1, H 5, H 4, H 3, R 2, Sloane;  
 Add. has the.

2755. Phalantus P. 2756. Inamed] named R — Aratus P.

2758. Tharente H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J leaf 73 verso.

Be glad aspectis off Fortunys face;  
 For she hym reised be fauour off hir myht 2764  
 To dukis estat from a ful poore knyht.

at the time when the Spartans made war on the Messenians, who had ravished their maidens during a religious festival. But ceriousli this mater to conveie,  
 How he was maad[e] duk & gouernour,  
 Whan Spartheyns gan mortali werreie 2768  
 Geyn Messeniens, as seith myn auctour,  
 With gret costage and deligent labour.  
 And cause was this; for thei with myhti hond  
 Rauesshid be force all maidenys off that lond. 2772

For this peeple, now named Spartenoyis,  
 As the stori cleerli can deuise,  
 Wer callid afor[n]e Lacedemonoyis,  
 In armis preued, manli and riht wise. 2776  
 And whil thei dede a solempne sacrefise  
 Onto ther goddis, the peeple off Messenye  
 Rauesshid ther maidenys, or thei it koude espie.

So the Spartans laid siege to Messenia and vowed never to depart until the town was won. On which[e] wrong for to do vengauce,  
 The Spartenois kauhte indignacioun; 2780  
 And off assent, with al ther hool puissaunce,  
 Thei leide a siege round aboute the toun.  
 And off o will and oon affeccioun 2784  
 Thei made a vow\* the siege whan thei begunne,  
 Neuer to departe til the toun wer wonne.

[H]ow Spartenois lay ten yere atte sege and how  
 their wyves displesid with their longe absence  
 sent hem a message vt infra.]<sup>1</sup>

They lay before it ten years, until their wives at home grew impatient at their absence and sent a message, telling them that they were tired of living alone. Afor the toun fulli ten yeer thei lai,  
 And fro the siege, as thei hadde maad ther oth, 2788  
 Thei nat departed nouthen nyht nor dai,  
 But stille abood and nat assonder goth.  
 Theroff ther wyues beyng at hom wer wroth;  
 To ther husbondis a massager thei sente, 2792  
 Vnder these woordis declaryng ther entente.

2764. off] in H. 2765. ful] om. R, J.

2775. toforne H.

2785. a vow] avow B.

2787. Afforne H. 2789. nor] ne H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 73 verso, inner margin.

Saide it was nat accordyng with resoun,  
 Thei lik widwes to lyue disconsolat,  
 Withoute confort or consolacioun,  
 Ferr from ther husbondis to stonde al desolat,  
 Myscheuys considred, that fall in ech estat  
 Be long absence, which ech man sholde dreede,  
 Thoruh duyrs siknesse that fall in womanheede. 2800

"The tid abit nat for no maner man,  
 Nor stynt his cours for no creature;  
 And hard it is, as we reherse can,  
 Thyng to withsonde that kom[er]th off nature. 2804  
 Harm doon be kynde is froward to recure;  
 And ther is founde ful litil sekirnesse,  
 Wher-as nature afforceth brotilnesse.

and that if their  
 husbands didn't  
 look out, they  
 might find that  
 others had  
 taken their  
 places;

This litil sonde auhte inouh suffise,  
 To declare damage that mai fall  
 Be long absence, folkis that be wise.  
 Sumtyme departed, ageyn men may nat call;  
 That seelde is seyn, in loue doth appall;  
 And nothyng mor maketh wyues erre,  
 Than disseueraunce off folk that be in werre."

2808 for there is litte  
 security where  
 nature afforces  
 frailty.

This was theeffect, pleyntli in substaunce,  
 Sent to ther husbondis, which at the siege lai,  
 Compleynyng thei hadde had no plesaunce  
 Space off ten yeer, as in louys plai;  
 But desolat, in sorwe and gret affrai,  
 Ther liff thei ladde, affermyng in sentence,  
 Cause off ther cohstreynt was ther long absence. 2820

And whan the lettres wer at the siege rad  
 Toform the cite in al ther mortal stryues,  
 Thei wer astonyd and gan to wexe sad,  
 And verrai weri almost off ther lyues,  
 For to conside the compleynt off ther wyues.  
 Till ther capteyn a\* remedie out souht,  
 Be whos counsail euene thus thei wrouht:

When the mes-  
 sage was read  
 at the siege,  
 there was great  
 consternation,

First olde knyhtis that hadde the siege sworn  
 It for tacomplisshe, and cast hem to be trewe,  
 His counsail was, as thei hadde hiht befor,  
 To holde ther promys & theroff nothyng rewe;  
 But yonge knyhtis, that wer come off newe,

2828 and Phalanthus  
 suggested that  
 the old knights  
 should keep  
 their vow and  
 remain, but  
 that the  
 younger ones  
 could return  
 home if they  
 wished.

2797. al] om. R. 2812. seldom P. 2814. folkis R.  
 2816. the] om. R, H. 2818. Spaces R.  
 2821. 1st ther] om. R. 2827. a] and B.



Mihte as thei list[e], freli at ther will,  
Chese wher thei wolde go or bide still.

And heerupon for ther most auail, 2836  
In haste ther capteyn, as maad is remembraunce,  
Off hih prudence gaff hem this counsail:  
That knyhtis olde, lich ther assuraunce,  
Sholde off the siege haue the gouernaunce, 2840  
And yonge knyhtis, most fressh & weel beseyn,  
Sholde from the siege hom be sent ageyn.

This they did;  
and when they  
reached home  
they decided  
to exchange  
wives and each  
to take the first  
one that came  
to hand.

Thei made among hem a ful straunge  
ordenaunce [p. 179]  
At ther hom comyng: withoute difference 2844  
To entirchaunge ther wuyes for plesaunce,  
And take hir first that cam to ther presence.  
This was thaccord among hem in sentence,  
Most redi weie, to ther opynyoun, 2848  
To engendrure and procreacioun.

So, without  
quarreling, they  
misused one  
another's wives;  
and the children  
born to them  
were called  
Parthenie,  
which means  
engendered in  
adultery.

Ther was among hem quarel nouthur striff  
In this mateer, nor no variaunce;  
For eueri man mysused othres wiff 2852  
To ther desirs as was to hem plesaunce.  
And thus childre thoruh this ordenaunce  
That wer engendrid, the cas is thus befall,  
Parthenois men dede hem afftir call. 2856

Which in our tunge, to speke in woordes pleyne,  
Afftir the Greek, who list conside and see,  
Is no mor[e], platli for to seyne,  
Than thilke childre which engendrid be 2860  
In auoutrie: wherfor, in that cuntre,  
Parthenois off custum thei wer namyd,  
Born off wombes which that wer diffamyd.

The result was,  
that no one had  
a just claim to  
his inheritance,

The fals occasioun off this auoutrie 2864  
Caused afftir gret myscheeff & damage,  
That no man koude, as for his partie,  
Be successioun, whan he cam to age,  
Be title off riht cleyme his heritage; 2868  
For wher a lyne falsli doth procede,  
Hard is to knowe be riht who shal succede.

2835. abyde R.

2836. heerupon] therupon R.

2840. 1st the] om. H. 2842] om. R.

2849. and] and mak R. 2850. nouthur] nor H.

The disturbaunce off fals successioun  
 And titles cleymed, afforced with gret myht,  
 Wher that auoutrie hath domynacioun  
 And is supportid off will & nat off riht,  
 And cleym off trouthe hath lost his cleer[e] liht, —  
 Thouh ther parties myhti been and stronge,  
 God wil nat suffre thei shal endure longe.

as always  
 happens where  
 there is  
 adultery.

2872

2876

And Spartennois peisying all these thynges,  
 How fals assurance was in ther lynage,  
 The ientil blood troublid first off kynges;  
 For no man knew, off hih nor low parage,  
 His owne fader be liknesse off visage, —  
 Nor fader non, bi his gret errour,  
 Koude yeue no title to his successour.

No one knew  
 who his father  
 was; no father  
 was sure of his  
 own son;

2880

2884

Wherupon folwed a gret myschaunce,  
 Hatful to heere: thoruhout the cuntre  
 Ech man troubled in his cuntenaunce,  
 Who sholde cleyme be any liberte  
 To entre his lond or to stonde fre,  
 Such doubte thei hadde, ech man for his partie;  
 So importable was the[r] auoutrie!

and as no one  
 was able to  
 establish a  
 valid claim to  
 his own land,

2888

This grete myscheeff, who-so taketh heed,  
 Be long processe made hem to knowe & see  
 How thei wer able, as be likliheed,  
 For ther outrages to\* fall in pouerte.  
 And off assent thei cast hem for to fle,  
 Vnder a capteyn, be strong & myhti hond,  
 Fro\* that cuntre to wynne sum other lond.

2892 they feared that  
 they would fall  
 into poverty,  
 and decided  
 to flee their  
 country and try  
 to win another.

2896

And, as I reede, thei ches duk Palantus,  
 Off whom I spak, to gouerne ther passage,  
 Takyng no leue, the stori tellith thus,  
 At ther departyng, begynnyng ther viage,  
 Thei wer so confus off cheer & off visage:  
 For ther was noon off al that grete route,  
 To chese his fader but that stood in doute.

Duke  
 Phalanthus was  
 chosen captain;  
 and they left  
 without taking  
 leave,

2900

2904

2878. Spartennois] Partennoys R, Parthenois J, P.

2881. louh nor hih H.

2895. to] forto B.

2898. Fro] For B, R, J.

2902. At] And R.

confused and  
overcome with  
shame, and  
arrived at  
Tarentum, a  
city in Naples.

Thei heeld hemsilff[e] verrai[ly] ashamed,  
And for shame out off that lond thei wente,  
Lik a peeple disclaundred & diffamed 2908  
Thoruh thauoutrie, to which thei dede assente.  
And to a cite that callid was Tharente,  
Which stant in Poile, a myhti strong cuntre,  
This duk Palantus cam with his meyne. 2912

There Duke  
Phalanthus  
expelled the  
citizens and  
long governed  
the country in  
prosperity,

And ther he putte, thoruh his gret[e] myht,  
The citeseyn[e]s out off that cite,  
And gat Tharente ful lik a manli knyht,  
And ther abood in long prosperite 2916  
As gouernour & duk off that cuntre,  
Till that his peeple be fals collusioun  
Hym to depryue souht out occasioun.

until he was  
exiled by his  
subjects in  
his old age.  
Men cannot put  
their trust in  
the commons.

Thei hym exilid whan he was fall in age. 2920  
Loo, what it is in comouns to assure!  
Stormy off herte, onseur off ther corage,  
That seelde or neuer ther frenship doth endure.  
Men mai to-dai ther fauour weel recure, 2924  
And tomorwe lat set it at a preeff:  
Thei rathest hyndre whan men stonde at myscheeff.

[Off Ceson Quincius exiled and Graccus take  
prisonere.]<sup>1</sup>

Ceso Quintius  
and Gracchus,  
prince of the  
Æqui, next began  
to complain with  
one voice to  
Bochas.

I CAN no mor reherse off Palantus, [p. 180]  
Duk & ledere off Parthennois; 2928  
But I will tell how Ceson Quincius  
Cam tofor Bochas, with a ful pitous vois  
His tale gan, and\* Graccus prince off Equois, —  
Bothe attonys gan ther song entune, 2932  
Most doolfulli to pleyne vpon Fortune.

Ceso was  
banished Rome,  
although a  
dictator.

This myhti prince Ceson Quincius  
Compleyned first, as maad is mencion,  
How thei off Rome wer contrarious 2936  
And felli wrouhte to his destruccioun,  
And ful oniustli bashed hym the toun,

2906. verraily] verrai MSS., very P.

2929. Ceso Quintius P.

2930. ful] om. H.

2931. and] how B, J, and how P, H 5, R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 74 recto.

And natwithstandyng he was a dictatour,  
Hym to confounde thei dede ther labour.

2940

Cause off his exil compassid, as I reede,  
That he was slouh, thei saide, & necligent  
Hym to defende touchyng apel in deede,  
[Which] that ageyn hym was wrouht off fals  
entent.

The Romans  
said he  
neglected to  
defend himself  
in a suit,  
although his  
father Cincin-  
natus made  
amends for him.

2944

Yit Cincinnatus, his fader, be assent  
Paide for amendis, as seyn cronycleris,  
Met out off lond drauht off thre arblasteris.

Yit his enmyes wolde nat be content,  
But proceded that he was exiled,  
Dede execucioun off his iugement,  
As in his story ful pleykli is compiled,  
He afftir neuer myht be reconciled,  
Which I ha[ue] pite to put in remembraunce, —  
So litel offence sholde ha[ue] so gret vengauce!

2948 But his enemies  
were unfor-  
giving and he  
was never after  
recalled.

2952

Graccus off Rome, callid Cloellius,  
Prynce off Equoys, myn auctour seith the same,  
Was in his tyme notable and glorious,  
And a gret duk, ful renommed off fame.  
But how the peeple of Equois first took name,  
Vnder support, that no man ha[ue] disdeyn,  
I will the processe declare heer in certeyn.

Clælius  
Gracchus was  
prince of the  
Æqui,

2956

Iohn Bochas seith, ther is a nacioun  
Which that first[e] wer callid Hunois,  
And secondli also bi successioun  
Off ful long tyme named Anathois;  
And aldirlast men callid hem Equois,  
Lich as I trowe myn auctour seith the same,  
Off hors most swift thei took[e] first the name.

who were first  
called Hunois  
and afterwards  
Anathois,

2964

And as it is remembred in sentence,  
Bi ther manheed and famous hardynesse,  
Geyn Alisandre thei made a strong diffence  
On hors[e]bak thoruh ther gret swiftnesse.

and fought  
bravely against  
Alexander in  
the Caucasus,

2972

2943. apel] the appele P, thappell R 3.

2944. that] om. J, P. 2949. proceede R.

2950. execucioun] extorcioun J.

2951. As] & H — his] om. R.

2959. Aequoys P — first took] took first ther R, J, P — name]

be name H, her name R 3, ther name H 5.

2960. haue] will H. 2961. heer] om H.

2970. manhode R, manhod H.



Beside the hill[e], pley[n]li to expresse,  
Which in cronycles is callid Caucasus,  
This peep[le] off Equois were victorious.

and were great  
horsemen,  
conquering  
Ethiopia and  
India and all  
Egypt.

To ther noblesse, pley[n]li as I fynde,  
Nothyng in erthe was mor expedient  
In ther conquest off Ethiopie and Inde,  
As hors most swift, seruyng ther entent,  
Therbi conqueryng al the orient.  
So gret prowesse was in ther passage,  
That Equois brouhte al Egipt in seruage.

2976

2980

Wherever they  
rode they got  
plunder; but  
when Gracchus  
incited them  
against the  
Romans, he  
was beaten by  
Cincinnatus,  
a poor but  
worthy knight.

Thus wher-euer Equois dede ride,  
Thei gat gret good to ther possessioun.  
And Gracchus was ther gouernour & guide,  
Which bi his steryng and fals suggestioun  
Ageyn the Romeyns fill in rebelloun;  
But to withstonde hym thei sent out anon riht  
Cyncynatus, preued a ful good knyht.

2984

2988

He was weel trusted and knowe in the toun,  
And for his prudence chose a dictatour.  
His lifode smal and his possessioun,  
Al-be he was a worthi werreour,  
Which hath venquysshid be his knyhtli labour  
The said[e] Gracchus, for al his gret poweer,  
And hom to Rome brouht hym prisoneer.

2992

2996

Cincinnatus  
was granted  
a triumph,  
and Gracchus  
died in prison,

Cyncynatus in [his] char was set,  
Callid Quincius, for this gret victorie,  
And most solempneli with senatours met,  
Which gaff to hym, for tenrece his glorie,  
Laude off tryumphe, to putte hym in memorie.  
And Gracchus afftir, for his rebelloun,  
With cheynys bounde, cast in a derk prisoun.

3000

which is an  
evidence to us  
that Fortune is  
always false and  
deceitful.

And ther he deide in ful gret myscheeff,  
Afftir his conquestis first famous & notable.  
An evidence to vs and a gret preeff,  
How that Fortune is ai fals & onstable,  
Euer double, froward and deceyuable,  
The fall off Gracchus declare can ful weel,  
That whilom sat so hih vpon hir wheel.

3004

3008

2974. callid is H.

2980. Therbi] gretly H.

2983. ride] abyde R. 2988. out] om. H. 2993. was he R.

[Here Bochas rehercith the tyrannye of Apius and falsnesse of Iuges.]<sup>1</sup>

**N**ATWITHSTANDYNG Bochas afori hath  
told

[p. 181]

Off Appius the falsnesse importable,  
And his outrages & surfetis manyfold,  
To be remembred hatful and repreneable,  
Yit as hym thouhte, it was heer couenable,  
To mor rebuk and spottying off his name,  
Newe to reherse his sclaunder & his diffame.

3012 Notwithstanding that Bochas had already told about the dishonesty of Appius, he thought it would be well to rehearse it once again, the more to rebuke his name.

The grete offencis off this Appius  
And oppressiouns that he vpon hym took,  
Made hym to growe so inli coueitous,  
Thoruh his rauyne that al the peeple quook,  
As ye mai seen in the seconde book,  
Wher myn auctour doth cleerli specefie  
His fraude in doomys, & his fals lecherie.

3020 A lustful, infamous tyrant,

Eek off this tirant remembred ye mai reede  
Cheeff iuge he was, with other officeris,  
Callid decemvir; & thoruh his pride in deede,  
Ageyn the custum of them that wern his feeris,  
He made be born standardis & baneris  
In other wise, off hih presumpcioun,  
Than vsid was afori in Rome toun.

3024

chief judge and decemvir, he went about Rome with standards and banners borne before him in a manner quite different from that of earlier days; and whereas formerly there had been

These iuges hadde a custum & maneer,  
Lik ther estatis in ther gouernaunce,  
Ech afftir other to ha[ue] born a baner  
Wher thei wente, such was thordynaunce,  
Be twelue sergauntis noumbred in substaunce.  
But Appius off pride and gret outrage  
I-chaungid hath that custum and vsage.

3032

twelve sergeants, this Appius ordained that there should be 120 men of arms, to overawe the people.

3036

He ferst ordeyned ech sholde in his place  
Off decemvir haue a baner born,  
In ther walkyng, the peeple to manace,  
An hundred men off armys them tofori,  
And twenti ouer, bi a statut sworn.

3040

3011. to-fori R, toforne H.

3020. to] om. R—so] for R. 3024. fals] om. R.

3025. off] om. R. 3031. vsid was] visis were R.

3034. to haue born] ta borne H, to ha born J, R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 74 verso.

They thought  
it remarkable  
for judges to go  
about in this  
fashion; but all  
that Appius  
wanted was  
power to do as  
he pleased and  
to oppress the  
people at his  
will.

After the death  
of Virginia

he was put in  
chains and died  
in prison,

and the  
decemvirs were  
abolished and  
succeeded by  
tribunes.

Wherbi the cite bar gret cost in deede,  
And al the peeple wer put in feer & dreede. 3044

To seen the sergantis walke in plate & maile,  
Thei thouhte it was a merueilous werkyng,  
Iuges to gon with such[e] apparaile 3048  
In ther procedyng, as ech had been a kyng.  
And hool thentent off Appius menyng,  
Was that he sholde, off power & off myht,  
Doon what hym list, wher it wer wrong or ryht, 3052

The rihtful pun[y]she and the gilty spare,  
Fauoure wrong for bribes & for meede.  
The peeple oppressid stood in sorwe & care, 3056  
Fond no socour to help hem in ther neede;  
Lawe was ther non, for resoun lai be dreede,  
Will was iuge and plesaunce equite,  
And thus be maistri was gouerned the cite.

And as it is remembred be Bochas, 3060  
Appius was lecherous off nature,  
And cauht a quarel, as ye han herd the caas,  
Ageyn Virgynea, a maide cleene & pure.  
And for he sholde in hir nothyng recure 3064  
Touchyng his lust, hir fader in that striff  
With a sharp suerd made hir lose hir liff.

And for this tiraunt be fals ribaudie 3068  
Caused hir deth be hasti violence,  
And for he sholde hir beute nat maistrie,  
Deieng a maide in hir chast innocence,  
Therfor he was demed in sentence, 3072  
As is toforn maad cleer[e] mencioun,  
For to be cheyned and deien in prisoun.

Eek decemvir losten ther power,  
And neuer in Rome afftir bar no name,  
Nor off that sect was maad non officer; 3076  
And among all Appius bar the blame,  
Whos crym reboundeth to his eternal shame,  
As ye han herd[e], who that can discernen, —  
And thanne tribunys wer chose for to gouerne. 3080

3047. werkyng] walkyng R.

3050. menyng] meevyng R.

3064. no thyng in hir H.

3071. demed] demyng H.

3074. decemvir] decemviri P.

And in Bochas lik as it is founde,  
 The said[e] iuges in myscheff dede fyne;  
 Whil Appius lay in prisoun bounde,  
 Exiled wer[e]n all the tother nyne.  
 The good, the tresour off them & off ther lyne  
 Achetid was, for short conclusioun,  
 To comoun profit & ences off the toun.

While Appius  
 lay in prison,  
 the other judges  
 were exiled and  
 their goods and  
 treasure  
 3084 escheated for  
 the common  
 profit.

¶ *Lenvoye.*

**T**HIS litil tragedie doth shortli heer deuise, 3088  
 What myschef folweth for the grete onriht  
 Vsid be iuges in many sundri wise:  
 For whan that fauour bleendid hath ther siht,  
 And innocence is bor down with myht,  
 And in his quarel pouert may nat proceede,  
 Because that trouthe oppressid is with meede.

This litte  
 tragedy shews  
 what mischief  
 can be done by  
 venal judges, to  
 whom might is  
 right.

A iuge sholde off equite despise  
 To take giffes off any maner wiht,  
 And redi been all wrongis to chastise,  
 From all giffes turne awei his siht,  
 His handis close, his eris stoppe ariht,  
 And been ai war, for frenshipec, hate or dreede, 3100  
 That trouthe be nat oppressid with no meede.

[p. 182] A judge ought  
 to despise gifts,  
 3096 chastise all  
 wrongs and not  
 allow truth to  
 be overcome by  
 rewards.

The noble doctryn and vertuous emprise  
 Off philisophres, that hadde so gret insiht,  
 Was this to iuges, that prudent wer & wise:  
 For freend or fo ther doomys so be diht,  
 Off rihtwisnesse that the sunne briht  
 Eclipsed neuer, list men for ther falsheede  
 Reporte that riht was put a-bak for meede. 3108

Such was the  
 noble doctrine  
 of philosophers,  
 who said that  
 3104 judges should  
 never allow the  
 sun of righteous-  
 ness to be  
 eclipsed.

Noble Pryncis, supportours off iustise,  
 Callid lodesterris to yeue the peeple liht,  
 On Appius lat iuges nat\* practise,  
 That trouthes laumpe be cleer bothe dai & nyht. 3112  
 Your office peised, that longeth to a knyht,  
 Hold up the balaunce off doom in your manheede,  
 That lawe in iuges be nat corupt with meede!

Noble princes,  
 do not let judges  
 follow the  
 example of  
 Appius and  
 corrupt the  
 law through  
 bribery.

3085. lynes H. 3088. heer] *om.* J. 3091. that] the R.  
 3094. trouthe] trouhe R.  
 3106. that] of R. 3108. a-bak] away H.  
 3111. lat nat luges B.



## ¶ Bochas ageyn thontrowith of Iugis.

After rebuking  
Appius, Bochas  
wrote somewhat  
angrily, that  
judges should  
be of mature  
age and vir-  
tuous in their  
lives.

SVYNG vpon the deth off Appius 3116  
And his rebukes for his gret outrage,  
Bochas be writyng wex sumwhat irous  
Geyn iuges false, & thouht in his corage  
Thei shulde be sad & demeure off age, 3120  
And that ther liffe be vertu sholde drawe,  
To keepe the preceptis & statutis off the lawe.

They ought to  
have knowledge  
of philosophy  
and devote their  
time to civil  
and canon law.

Thei ouhte off resoun themseluen to habile,  
To haue science off philosophie, 3124  
And knowe ther textis off canoun & cyuyle,  
And therupon her wittis hool applie;  
For cunnyng iuges be prudent policie  
Cause ordenaunces, in lawe comprehendid, 3128  
Thoruh rihtful doom gretli to be comendid.

Justice is a  
very important  
thing to all  
realms,

Iustise off lawe doth rewmys enlumyne,  
Susteneth trouthe, supporteth innocence,  
Off raueynour[es] boweth down the chyne, 3132  
Punsheth robbours for ther gret offence,  
Sluggi truantis for ther negligence,  
And feyned beggeris, that gretli disauaile,  
Constreyneth them to labour & trauaile. 3136

and in old time  
the founders of  
law took care  
that princes  
went no further  
in their  
triumphs than  
the law of  
God and Nature  
permitted.

Foundours off lawe bi antiquite,  
Caused in londis was suffred non errour,  
And made off pryncis the roial maieste  
To shyne in worshepe, be diligent labour, 3140  
Wrestid corages off many conquerour,  
That ther tryumphes no ferther sholde atteyne  
Than lawe off God & nature dede ordeyne.

Will was then  
subject to  
righteousness  
and sensuality  
to reason.

Will was that tyme vnder subieccioun 3144  
Off rihtwisnesse, be trouthe ful weel conueid,  
Sensualite was seruaut to resoun,  
And froward lust was vnder lok weel keied;  
Sentence off statutis was nat disobeied, 3148  
The riche dede riht thoruhout eueri lond,  
Poore folk lyued be labour off ther hond.

3123. themseluen] ther silff H.

3124. be science H.

3128. Cause] Cause of R.

3130. illumyne R.

3134. Slouggi R.

Lordshipe that tyme auoided meyntenance,  
 Hoolichirch lyued in parfitnesse;  
 Knyththod tho daies for trouthe whet his launce,  
 And fals extorsion hadde non interesse;  
 Marchantis wynnyng cam al off rihtwisnesse,  
 Artificers the werkdaie wer nat idill,  
 And bisynesse off labour heeld the bridill.

The lords  
 avoided main-  
 3152 tenance, and the  
 clergy led lives  
 of perfection;  
 merchants did  
 not cheat;  
 knights sup-  
 ported truth,  
 3156

Women that age farsid wer nor hornyd,  
 Nor ther tailles wer nat serpentyne;  
 Wis men off foli, nor clerkis wer nat scornyd,  
 Which in science most fresshly dede shyne.  
 Lawe disherited non heires from ther lyne,  
 Lesyngmongers fond that tyme no socours,  
 And flaterers thanne wer maad no confessours.

nor did women  
 paint their faces  
 or wear horned  
 headdresses and  
 3160 long trains.  
 Wise men and  
 scholars were  
 not looked down  
 upon and  
 flatterers were  
 never made  
 confessors.  
 3164

This goldene world[e], flouyng in vertu,  
 Born vp be loue groundid on stabilnesse,  
 Off auoutri ther sprang out non issu,  
 Pryncis be doctryne establissed ther noblesse,  
 Preesthod in praier, knyththod in worthynesse,  
 Ech thyng be lawe stood vnder gouernance,  
 Marchantis be mesour & iust peis off balaunce.

It was a golden  
 world borne up  
 by love and  
 just law.

First Phoroneus be dilligent labour [p. 183]  
 Fond out lawes, that kyng was off Argyues;  
 The Grekis studie he gilte with gret honour.  
 This poletik prynce, tauoide hem fro stryues,  
 His statutis kept[e] duryng al ther lyues,  
 Fond first the maner, Bochas doth deuyse,  
 How to Iubiter was maad sacrefise.

Phoroneus,  
 3172 king of Argos,  
 invented laws  
 and sacrifices  
 to Jupiter.

Eek myhti Mynos, whilom kyng off Crete,  
 Ordeyned lawes ageyn transgressiouns,  
 To fere bi rigour foolis that were onmeete,  
 And staunche off surfetis all occasiouns,  
 Make for robbours myhti strong prisouns;  
 And Dedalus, his cheeff artificer,  
 Made Laberintus be deligence entier.

3176

Minos, king of  
 3180 Crete,  
 ordained laws  
 against fools  
 and robbers,

And eek Mercurie, born be the flood of Nyle,  
 As writ Lactance, was off Egipt kyng,  
 Onto marchantis dede lawes first compile  
 Off weihte and mesour, to vs[e] in chaffaryng.

3184

and Mercury,  
 3188 king of Egypt,  
 legislated for  
 merchants and  
 standardized  
 their weights  
 and measures.

3153. for trouthe whet] quet H. 3168. be] with R.  
 3172. First by H. 3175. tauoide] auoyde R.  
 3182. al be H. 3183. Make] Made H.  
 3187. As] And R — Lactance] Bochas H.

And for his wisdam & excellent kunnyng,  
Off olde poetis, that whilom wer so wise,  
He callid was god off marchaundise.

3192

Solon  
established  
excellent laws  
for the  
Athenians and  
hated tyrants.

Solon also the beste lawes made,  
As writ Valeri, hymself to magnifie:  
Athenye[n]ses theroff wer ful glade,  
His gret[e] wisdam whan thei dede espie;  
Thei fond theryn so moch[e] policie.  
And he was redi euer to debate  
Ageyn tirantis, so sore he dede hem hate.

3196

Lycurgus made  
his people  
swear to keep  
the law while  
he was away on  
a pilgrimage,

Kyng Ligurgus eek whilom dede his cure  
To make lawes to comoun auantage,  
And that thei sholde perpetueli endure,  
He made his peeple be sworn, off eueri age,  
Whil that he wente out on pilgrymage,  
Fro poynt to poynt to keepe hem in certeyn,  
Onto tyme that he cam hom ageyn.

3200

3204

and since his  
laws were so  
useful and  
important, he  
preferred not  
to return home  
again, so that  
his statutes  
might never be  
broken.

And for his lawes wer off gret substaunce  
And profitable to eueri comounte,  
He ches to lyue in exil and penaunce,  
Neuer to resorte ageyn to his contre,\*

3208

That his statutis be eternyte  
Sholde nat be broke, as ye han herd toforn,  
Bi the convencioun to which that thei wer sworn.

3212

Before he died  
he commanded  
that his bones  
should be cast  
far out into  
the sea,

To comoun profit had he such tendirnesse,  
That he forsook his kyngdam & kenreede  
[To] lyue in exill, his story berth witnesse.

3216

But or he deied, as he lay bedreede,  
He bad his bonys sholde be cast in deede  
Amyd the se, ferr out fro the stronde,  
That his statutis myhte in ther strengthe stonde. 3220

that there might  
be no occasion  
for his subjects  
to be false to  
their vow.

He eschewed euerich occasioun,  
As [a] thyng hatful which was nat fair,  
That his forsaid[e] roial myhti toun  
Sholde breke ther oth because off his repair.  
But touchyng that, he put hem in despair,  
Cast hym neuer resorten in ther dawes,  
List thei wolde breke the sentence off his lawes.

3224

3194. Valeri writ R. 3195. Athemeses R.

3198. euer he was redy for to R.

3200. Kyng] om. H — Licurgus P.

3210. his] this H — contre] cite B, J, R, cite H 5, cite P.

3219. from R, J, R 3, P, frome H.

¶ An exclamacioun of Bochas ageyn thextorsions  
& oppressions of þe poraill of Rome.<sup>1</sup>

JOHN BOCHAS heer makith a digressioun,  
And bi rebukyng cast hym for tassaile  
Thilke officeres that wer in Rome toun,  
Which bextorsioun oppressid the poraile, —  
And ageyn iuges also off Itaile,  
A[nd] namli them, that for lucre & meede  
Sett trouthe aside & took off it noon heede.

3228 John Bochas  
digresses here,  
rebuking the  
dishonest  
officials and  
judges of Italy  
and Rome, who  
oppressed the  
poor  
3232

He maketh ageyn hem an exclamacioun,  
Such as to vertu wer contrarious,  
And vnder colour and occasioun  
Off ther office list to be lecherous,  
Lik condiciowned onto Appius,  
And fynali, as it was afftir seene,  
Fals in ther domys & off ther liff oncleene.

and took  
advantage of  
their position to  
be licentious,  
like Appius,  
false in their  
decisions and  
foul in their  
lives.  
3236  
3240

O, quod Bochas, O trouthe, O thou Iustise,  
Which in your noblesse whilom dede excell,  
Wher in effect is now your exercise?  
Wher is your wonyng? alas, wher do ye duell?  
Off your practik ful fewe men can tell,  
So ferr put bak is now your disciplyne,  
Your kyn exiled and your noble lyne!

"Where are  
Truth and  
Justice now,"  
he exclaimed,  
3244 "Where do they  
dwell? Few  
men can tell  
of their  
practise.

Aduocatis that now doon ocupie  
Your olde sees & placis ful roiall,  
Al to falsheed ther wittis thei applie, —  
Such couetise now regneth ouer all!  
Causes off cyuyle & causes cremynall  
Ther doomys take, wher thei be fals or trewe,  
Al afftir will be statutis chaungid newe.

3248  
[p. 184] "Advocates  
apply their wits  
only to false-  
hood, and  
judgments are  
wholly depen-  
3252 dent on will.

Ther been eek other callid accessours,  
Sittyng be iuges to yeuen hem counsail,  
Which may ful weel be callid raueynours;  
For thei nat laboure but for ther owne auail.  
A noubre off robbours folwe at ther tail,  
To pile the peeple, as ye han herd toform,  
Bare as a sheep that is but newe shorn.

3256 "Assessors, who  
give counsel to  
judges, might  
better be called  
raviners; their  
labour is all for  
their own profit.  
3260

3233. &] or H, R.

3249. doon] doth R. 3253. &] or R. 3259. for] om. R.

3260. ther] the R.

<sup>1</sup> "Here Bochas makith an exclamacioun of the extorcioun of the officers of Rome," MS. J, leaf 75 verso.



"No more is to  
be said than that  
Truth stands  
desolate, and  
righteousness  
dare not  
complain.

Ther is no mor in this mateer to seyne,  
Sauff onli this: trouthe stant desolat, 3264  
[And] rihtwisnesse to no wiht dar compleyne,  
With wrong oppressid, wepyng disconsolat.\*  
Wherfor, ye Pryncis, that sit in hih estat,  
Such thyng tamende but ye bet heed list take, 3268  
God shal with you a ful hard reknyng make.

"Princes, if you  
do not reform  
these things,  
God will make  
a hard reckon-  
ing with you.

Your office is in your magnificence  
Twen man and man all wronges to redresse,  
And wher a mateer is ageyn conscience, 3272  
It to refourme onli off rihtwisnesse;  
To stonde be trouthe, meyntene no falsnesse,  
And lete wis counseil such materes examyne  
Or ye off haste theron\* determyne. 3276

"He will reward  
you as you  
deserve!"

Hath such thynges in *your* mynde among;  
Thynk God will quite lik as ye disserue.  
Ye spotte your noblesse iff that ye do wrong,  
His suerd off punshyng dredith or it kerue. 3280  
Lat your resoun & conscience conserue  
Your noble estatis, & thynk, lik *your* werkyng,  
The Lord off you will axen a reknyng.

[Off Alcibiades exiled and affir brent in his bedde.] <sup>1</sup>

After this,  
Alcibiades,  
fairest of men,  
appeared to  
Bochas. He  
was strong,  
wise and  
discreet, born of  
high lineage,  
popular, brave,  
and a great  
orator.

AFFTIR other bat put hemsilf in pres, 3284  
Tofor Bochas ther compleyntis to discure,  
Cam off Athenys Alcibiades,  
That tyme a-lyue the fairest creature.  
And as it is remembred be scripture, 3288  
He was discreet and wis at all assaies,  
And oon the strengest & manli in his daies.  
He was first born off riht hih lynage,  
Aboue all other off most semlynesse, 3292  
Weel proporciowned and hardi off corage,  
Loued & weel fauoured for his gret fairnesse,  
Famous in knyhtod for his worthynesse,  
Sotil wittid, and koude bi eloquence 3296  
Moche comprehende vnder short sentence.

3265. to no wiht dar] dare nouth R.

3266. disconsolat] desolate R, & disconsolat B.

3275. such mateers wise counsaile H, R 3.

3276. theron] the trouthe B.

3290. And] om. R. 3292. semblynesse R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 77 recto.

His witt enclyned to manyfold sciences,  
 Hadde off kunnyng a passyng retentiff,  
 Loued clerkis, & fond hem ther despencis,  
 Such as in practik he sauh most inuentiff.  
 To reede in bokis reioished al his liff,  
 Kepte what he radde in his memoriall,  
 And off wis counseil was noon to hym egall.

3300 His retentive  
 mind turned  
 to many  
 branches of  
 learning; a  
 patron of  
 scholars and  
 great reader,  
 no one could  
 equal him in  
 wise counsel.  
 3304

An\* vncl he hadde Icallid Pericles,\*  
 Which stood in daunger, off excessiff spendyng;  
 Yit in his youthe this Alcibiades,  
 Seyng his vncl pensiff in lokyng,  
 Caste off wisdam to remedie that thyng;  
 And for tasswage his hertis heuynesse,  
 Gaff hym this counseil bi gret avisynesse:

3308 His uncle  
 Pericles once  
 stood in danger  
 of indictment  
 for exceeding  
 the amount  
 allowed him  
 in repairing  
 the temple of  
 Minerva; but  
 Alcibiades,  
 seeing him  
 downcast, said,

First to reherse how the mateer stood,  
 And off his vnclis woful hih distresse.  
 Ther was to hym delyuered a summe off good,  
 To repare the temple off a goddesse  
 Callid Mynerua; but for the gret excesse  
 Off his dispendyng\*, he stood sumwhat in dreede  
 Touchyng thacounte, which he mut yilde in deede.

3312

3316

Alcibiades heerupon musyng,  
 To his vncl gaff counseil in sentence.  
 "Vncl," quod he, "lat be al your thynkyng,  
 And for yoursilff[e] shapeth this diffence,  
 Nat for tacounte — be mene off your prudence,  
 Aforu prouyded, with face & cheer onfeyned,  
 To such duresse that ye be nat constreyned."

3320 "Do not  
 render any  
 account unless  
 you are com-  
 pelled."

3324

And whan Pericles\* his counseil aduertisith,  
 Fond to his worshep it was resonable;  
 And bi good leiser hymself ful weel aysith,  
 And bi prouysiouu, prudent and notable,  
 Saued his estat from ech thyng repreuable,  
 So that he stood[e], touchyng this mateer,  
 As for acomptis out off al daunger.

3328 And Pericles,  
 following this  
 advice, took  
 care so to  
 arrange his  
 affairs that  
 he finally  
 escaped all  
 danger of  
 reproof.

3332

3305. An] And B — called R — Perioles B, R, H.

3312. the] this R.

3317. dispendyng] dispense B, dispensis R, dispencis J,  
 dispenses P.

3321. al] om. R.

3326. whan] om. H — Perioles B, H, R.

3332. accowntis H.

Alcibiades  
ruled the  
Athenians both  
in war and  
peace, and was  
admiral of their  
navy.

Alcibiades, off Athene cheeff capteyn,  
Fro day to day wex up to gret encres,  
Such another was ther nowher seyn,  
Them to gouerne bothe in werre and pes.  
And al the cite bi assent hym ches,  
Off ther nauye in especial,  
Vpon the se to been ther amyral.

[p. 185]

3336

As governor of  
the Catanæans  
he made war on  
Syracuse,

For his knythod thei sent hym out a-ferre,  
Off Cathenois to be ther gouernour,  
Geyn Siracusanes for to gynne a werre.  
First ther receyued with glorie\* & gret honour,  
But in the eende off his gret labour,  
Fortune that is ay variant & onstable,  
Was to this duc nat founde fauourable.

3340

3344

but was recalled  
on a charge of  
treason and  
divested of all  
his offices.

He was accusid to them off the toun,  
Which in Athenys hadde gouernaunce,  
That he was gilty in parti off tresoun.  
Bi them reuoked, for al his gret puissaunce  
Off capteynship, and bi ther ordynaunce  
And Fortunys fals mutabilite,  
Onwarli pryued from al dignyte.

3348

3352

He then went  
into voluntary  
exile to save  
his life; for the  
Athenians  
desired to offer  
up his head to  
their gods.

But for hymself[e] thus he gan provide,  
Wente into exil nat ferr fro that cuntre  
Into a\* cite that callid was Elide,  
Ther for to ha[ue] fredam and liberte,  
And off his liff to stonde in surete;  
For in Athen thei wolde haue hym ded,  
Onto ther goddis to offren vp his héd.

3356

3360

Soon afterwards  
he went to  
Sparta, and  
there heard that  
through the  
misadventure of  
three captains

But whan he was off ther entent certeyn,  
To Lacedemoyne he took the riht[e] way,  
And be relacioun ther he herde seyn,  
How Thathenyenses wer put at affray  
In a bataile vpon a certyen day,  
Which that thei heeld, to ther aduersite,  
Geyn Cathenois, as thei fauht on the se.

3364

the Athenians  
had been  
defeated at sea  
by the  
Catanæans.

But the cause off this disconfiture,  
As was told to Alcibiades,  
Was bi thre capteyns, thoruh ther mysauenture,  
Which in ther ledyng wer founde rech[e]les.

3368

3333. Albiciades of Athenes H.

3334. to gret is repeated in R.

3343. gloire B.

3355. nat] and R.

3356. Into a] In ta B.

The cheeff off them named Demostenes,  
The tother callid, the stori tellith\* vs,  
The ton Niceas, the tother Eurilocus.

3372

Alcibiades, hauyng heeroff tidying,  
Tauenge his wrong put hymselff in pres;  
Off Lacedemoyne he goth first to the kyng,  
Which off trouthe was callid Agides,  
Besechyng hym to graunte to his encre  
Certeyn soudiours out off his cuntre,  
For to werreie Athenes\* the cite.

3376

So, in order to  
avenge his  
wrong, Alci-  
biades besought  
Agis, king of  
Sparta, to lend  
him an army  
to make war  
on Athens.

3380

Thus he wex strong, off noble prouidence,  
Hadde gret peeple vnder his gouernaunce,  
And lik a duk, maad strong in his diffence  
Be peeple gadred to his obeisaunce,  
That other pryncis, which wer off hih puissaunce,  
Gan haue envie, off wilful frowardnesse,  
And to maligne ageyn his hih noblesse.

3384

Thus he grew  
strong, and was  
envied because  
of his bravery  
and high re-  
nown, as always  
happens; for no  
man is free  
from the slander  
of venomous  
tongues.

3388

For seelde or neuer in any regioun,  
Prowesse off armys, noblesse off cheualrie,  
Encres in riches, report off hih renoun,  
Fame off kunnyng in craft or in clergie  
May nowher duelle withoute sum envie,  
From whos malice, as folk expert mai see,  
Sauf onli wrechis no man hath liberte.

3392

For which this prync, as put is in memorie,  
Escapit nat, for al his hih parage,  
But that summe envied at his glorie;  
For in this liff no man hath auauntage  
Ageyn tungen nor odious fals language.  
To stoppe such venym, this the beste obstacle,  
That men with suffraunce tempre ther triacle.

3396

3400

The cleer prowesse off Alcibiades  
Steyned the noblesse off other pryncis all;  
His eure hym reised up to so gret encres,  
To the hiest throne off Fortunys hall.  
Such fatal grace is onto hym fall,

3404

His clear  
prowess shad-  
owed the  
nobility of all  
other princes;  
no one equalled  
him in knight-  
hood.

3372. Domestenes R.

3373. tellith] techith B.

3374. Eurilocus] Lamachus P.

3377. he] om. H.

3381. Athenes] Athenos B, Athenois R.

3385. Be] The R.

3389. This stanza is marked with a scrawl of approval in margin, J.



That in tho daies, pleyntli this no fable, 3408  
Ther was in knythod noon to hym resemblable.

Yet the  
Spartans  
sought to eclipse  
his worthiness  
by false report

In his exil so cleer his renoun shon,  
And thoruh Grece gaff as gret brihtnesse  
As doth a rubi aboue ech other ston: 3412  
Yit for teclipse & shadwe his worthynesse,  
Lacedemonois dede ther besynesse,  
Such as myhte nat\* to his noblesse atteyne,  
Bi fals report his renoun to restreyn. 3416

and laid traps  
to take him  
unawares and  
bring him to  
ruin; but he  
always managed  
to escape,

Await was leid to take\* hym at myscheff, [p. 186]  
And many treynys wer serchid out & souht,  
Off entent taput hym at repreeff.  
But al that euer ageyn hym thei ha[ue] wrouht, 3420  
At the eende ther purpos cam to nouht;  
For God prouydeth off his magnificence  
Ageyn such malice to sauen innocence.

although his  
life was con-  
stantly in  
danger.

He was likli tafalle in gret daunger, 3424  
Lacedemonois gan at hym so disdeyne  
Because his honour & noblesse shon so cleer,  
That to his fon it was a dedli peyne.  
And thus his liff stood in noun certeyne; 3428  
For al-be-it he manli was and wis,  
He knew nothyng ther purpos nor malice.

To his  
misfortune  
he had  
a love affair  
with the queen,  
who warned  
him of his  
enemies and  
advised him  
to flee to  
Athens. There  
he took no  
revenge,

He hadde almost iwarned be\* to late,  
And lik tastonde in gret perplexite. 3432  
And mor his grace & fortune to abate,  
Bi thoccasioun off his gret beute, r  
He with the queen was wexen ful pryue;  
For in hir grace so weel stood ther non, 3436  
Which gaff hym warnyng off them that wer his fon.

And bi the counsail onli off the queen,  
Fro Lacedemoyn he wisli took his fliht  
Toward Athenys, & thouhte he wolde seen 3440  
His owne cuntre, ful lik a manli knyht.  
And thouh thei hadde nat gouerned hem a-riht

3408. this is R. 3409. in knythod was noon H  
3415. nat myhte B, R, J.  
3417. to take] tataka B. 3418. wer] om. R.  
3420. ageyn] geyn R. 3421. ther] the R.  
3424. tafalle] to fall R, H, J, R 3, P.  
3425. is misplaced at end of stanza; correction indicated, H.  
3428. no certeyn R 3, no certaine P. 3430. nor] & H.  
3431. be] bien B, ben H 5. 3437. them] other R.  
3440. thouhte] thouh R. 3442. thouh] thought R.

Towards hym, beyng in distresse,  
Tauenge his wrong he dede hem no duresse.

3444

For he thouhte it was ageyn nature,  
To be vengable or shewe his cruelte  
Bi thoccasioun off any auenture,  
Or gynne a werre vpon his cuntre;  
His natiff blood meued hym to pite,  
And off verrai natural ientillesse  
Was debonaire geyn ther onkynd[e]nesse.

for he did not  
believe it right  
to make war on  
his own country.

3448

The cas was this, for short conclusioun,  
How kyng Darie with gret apparaile  
Thouhte to werreie, off indignacioun,  
Them off Athenys and ther toun tassaile.  
And in his purpos proudli to preuaile,  
Thesiffernes, a prynce off gret puissaunce,  
Off Daries\* power hadde al the gouernaunce.

3452 At that time  
Darius was  
preparing to  
attack the  
Athenians

3456

Fynal cause and ground off al this werre,  
That Darius gan on hem so hastili,  
And that he sente his puissaunce fro so ferre  
For to destroie Athenys vtirli,  
Was to hold up and sustene the parti  
Off Lacedemoyne, which off old hatreede  
Wer euer envious them for toppresse in deede.

in aid of  
Sparta;

3460

But be mene off Alcibiades,  
And bi his trete foundid on prudence,  
Thesiffernes enclyned to the pes,  
Therbi in parti tappese his violence.  
And al was doon off noble prouidence,  
And fro the place to which he was exilid,  
He to Athenys sholde be reconciled.

but with the  
help of Alci-  
biades, peace  
was promised  
by the Persian  
general Tissa-  
phernes, on  
condition that  
the Athenians  
would do as  
Alcibiades told  
them.

3464

3472

Onto the cite he dede signefie  
How Darius hadde maad his ordenaunce,  
And bi his lettris he gan them specife,  
Yiff thei wolde stonde at his gouernaunce,  
To condescende, pleyntli in substaunce,  
He wolde laboure, and no lenger tarie,  
To make accord atwen hem & kyng Darie.

3476

3443. beyng] stoondyng R. 3444. duresse] distresse R.  
3451. geyn] ageyn R, H, H 5, again P.  
3455. tassaile] assaile H. 3456. his] om. R.  
3458. Daries] Darius B, Daryus H 5. 3461. frome H.  
3467. his] this R. 3469. tappese in party R.  
3473. the] this R. 3479. atwen] tween R.

In the city the  
senators were  
to have full  
control,

This was the mene that he mente: 3480  
Withynne Athenys that the senatours  
Sholde off the cite, afftir ther entente,  
Ha[ue] fulli lordshipe, and be ther gouernours.  
But as cleer wethir troublid is with shours, 3484  
Riht so vnwarli, withynne that roial toun,  
Thoruh this trete fill a discencioun.

but the com-  
mons, disdain-  
ing such thral-  
dom, recalled Al-  
cibiades to restore  
order.

The comowneris gan sodenli disdeyne 3488  
To be so thrallid vnder subieccioun;  
And so bassent the comouns dede ordeyne,  
Onli tappese al fals discencioun,  
For to reuoke ageyn into ther toun  
Alcibiades, as thei thouhte it meete, 3492  
Thoruh his prudence to sette hem in quyete.

He was made  
duke again and  
supported the  
commons. The  
senate fled,

First in his komyng, myn auctour doth reporte,  
He was maad duk ageyn off that cite,  
And gan the parti off comouns to supporte, 3496  
And them restore to ther old liberte.  
Wherthuruh the senat, dredyng the comounte,  
Fledde into exil ful ferr out off al pres,  
Onli for dreed off Alcibiades. 3500

and the people  
were brought  
to the point  
of yielding the  
town to the  
Spartans.

Thei stood that tyme in so gret disioynt, [p. 187]  
Ther toun deuided and out of gouernaunce,  
That thei wer brouht euene onto the poynt  
To yolde the cite vnto thobeissance 3504  
Of Lacedemoyne, thoruh ther vnhappi chaunce,  
Withynne hemsilff[e] whan thei gan debate,  
Vnto ther duk the senat bar such hate.

But Alcibiades,  
chosen by the  
commons as  
their defender,  
attacked the  
Spartans on  
the sea

But the comouns ches in ther diffence 3508  
Alcibiades to gouerne that viage.  
And to the se, with cost & gret dispence,  
Withoute abood he holdeth his passage  
In myhti shippis maad for auantage, 3512  
Weel enarmyd, & caste, yif he myhte,  
With Lacedemonios proudli for to fihte.

3486. this] his R — a] at R.

3490. al] as R.

3496. the] that R.

3499. into] in H — ful] om. H.

3503. onto] to R.

3504. To] Ta H — the] ther H.

3507. Vnto] Vndir R.

3510. dispence] expence R.

3513. enarmyd] armed R — &] om. H.

Thre myhti capteyns wern on the tother side,  
 The first[e] Zestro, Bochas tellith thus,  
 And the second that was ther lord & guide  
 Callid Midare, the thridde Pharbanasus,  
 On se and lond in armys ful pompous.  
 But of his kniethod and magnanymyte  
 Alcibiades took hem all[e] thre.

3516 and captured  
 their three  
 captains,  
 Zestro,  
 Mindarus and  
 Pharnabazus,

Strong was the fihrt or that thei wer[e] take,  
 Of al ther meyne away ther scaped non;  
 The duk that day gan swich a slauhtre make  
 Of hih prowessse vpon his mortal foon,  
 Cast ouerboord almost euerichon,  
 And aftir that, whan he cam to londe,  
 A newe bataille met hym on the stronde,

3520

and destroyed  
 all their men.

Swich wait was leid aboute hym environ  
 Of his enmyes be sodeyn auenture.  
 But of Athenys this myhti champioun,  
 Which myhte in armys most souereynli endure,  
 Made on his foon a [newe] disconfiture.  
 Thus in short tyme this prince in his estaat  
 On lond and se was twies laureat.

3524

3528

On landing he  
 again defeated  
 the enemy.

And aftir that, he list nat for to cesse  
 Nor tabide the space off halff a day:  
 The comoun proffitt of his toun tencrese,  
 Toward Asie he took the riht[e] way,  
 And touns, castellis that wer take away,  
 Which apertened to Athenys of riht,  
 He gat ageyn, ful lik a manli kniht.

3536

After that he  
 went to Asia  
 and recaptured  
 towns and  
 castles that  
 belonged to  
 Athens

3540

Maugre all that to hym wer contrarye,  
 Or wrouhte ageyn hym be rebellioun,  
 Thoruhout [al] Asie in the land of Darie  
 He knihtli brouht hem to subieccioun,  
 Ageyn whos swerd halp no proteccioun.  
 And fynal labour was off his entente,  
 The comoun proffitt off his toun taugmente.

3544

and brought  
 their inhabi-  
 tants again to  
 subjection.

3548

3515. Thre] The H.

3517. ther] be H.

3518. Midarus P, Pharbanazus P.

3520. and] and of his R.

3523. non] nat oon H.

3532. myhte] myhty R.

3535. se] watir R, H, J, R 3, watyr H 5, water P.

3541. to] of R.

3546. to] in R.



Returning to  
Athens, he  
was received  
with joy and  
great honour.

And with this glorie and with this hih noblesse  
He to Athenys repeired is ageyn;  
And al the cite, with ioie & gret gladnesse, 3552  
Cam out to meete hym upon a wol fair pleyn.  
And that his triumphes sholde openli be seyn,  
Bothe old & yong, with ful glad visages,  
Of ther goddis brouht out the images. 3556

The people  
cried, "Wel-  
come, victorious  
prince, our pro-  
tector and  
shield against  
all violence."

This was the[r] cry & noise of al the pres:  
"Victorious prince, whos triumphes marciall  
Shal euer be songe with loude and newe encre  
Tofor the goddis, which been inmortal, 3560  
Wolkome, wolkome! our protectour, our wall,  
Sheeld of our weelfare ageyn al violence,  
Phebus of knihthod, & swerd of our diffence!"

By their strange  
praise they  
made him an  
equal of the  
gods,

Thus with ther goddis thei maden hym egall 3564  
Bi vnkouth praisyng of paganysme rihtis,  
Lik as he hadde be verray inmortal,  
And sang refreites to comende his merites.  
Tenhaunce his glorie\* thei sette al ther delites, 3568  
And with the liht[e] of eternal fame,  
Sette up torchis tenlumyne with his name.

and hallowed  
certain days in  
honour of his  
prowess, until  
Fortune blinded  
his eyes with  
prosperity.

Thus certeyn daies thei halwed of entent,  
Thoruh [al] the cite for his hih prowess, 3572  
Til Fortune hath his eyen blent  
With newe fauour of worldli fals suetnesse.  
For al hir\* sugir is meynt with bittirnesse, —  
A bait of hony, shad out at pryme face, 3576  
With mortall venym hid vndir to manace.

When he  
thought he  
stood highest  
in her favour  
she brought  
misfortune on  
his people.

For in his hiest clymyng up aloffte,  
And in thascence of Fortunys wheel,  
Aftir hir custum, as she hath ful ofte, 3580  
Whan he best wende for tastonde weel,  
She drouh hir fauour from hym euerideel,  
Made the peeple vndir his obeissaunce  
To falle in myscheeff for lak of gouernaunce. 3584

3557. the] ther R.

3560, 66. Immortal H.

3565. paganismes R.

3567. refrectis H.

3568. And tenhaunce R, P — gloire B — sette] om. H.

3575. hir] ther B.

3576. at] of R.

3581. for to astonde R.

Thus fro this\* duk Fortune gan to varie,  
 And his noblesse go bak & eek faille,  
 Whan kyng Cyrus, successour to Darie,  
 Ful vnwarli fill on hym in bataille,  
 And gan his knihtis proudli to assaille,  
 Whan he dispurveied, void of prouidence,  
 Was ouerleid to make resistence.

[p. 188] Made reckless  
 by vainglory,  
 he was  
 defeated by  
 King Cyrus,

3588

For fynalli this Alcibiades  
 At myscheeff take, which he myhte nat recure,  
 Whan thoruh veynglori he was maad rek[e]les  
 His noble estat testablisshes & assure.  
 Lak of forsiht caused his disconfiture;  
 And to ences of mor aduersite,  
 Ban[y]shed ageyn out of his cite.

3592 and again  
 banished from  
 Athens.

3596

Thus diffacid and clipped was his glorie,  
 His cite put in straunge gouernaunce  
 Be Lacedemonys aftir ther victorie,  
 So that he knew no maner cheuisaunce  
 To refourme his vnhappi chaunce,  
 Sauf for refut, myn auctour doth reherse,  
 How that he fledde onto the kyng of Perse.

3600 He fled for  
 refuge to the  
 king of Persia.

3604

From Athenys of newe he was exilled;  
 And thretti personys, furious & vengable,  
 Chose in that cite, as Bochas hath compiled,  
 The toun gouerned, al-be thei wer nat able,  
 Vsyng a maner hatful and repreuable,  
 Thoruh ther rauyne temporisshe ther cite,  
 A thyng most odious to eueri comounte.

3608 and Athens was  
 then governed  
 by the Thirty  
 Tyrants, who  
 impoverished  
 the city through  
 their greed.

3612

A werm of dreed was bred up in ther herte,  
 Which suffred nat them to lyue in pes,  
 Among themsilff[e] whan thei dide aduerte  
 The grete prudence of Alcibiades,  
 How in manhod he was pereles,  
 List he wold aftir, for al ther multitude,  
 Knihtli aquite ther ingratitude.

3616 They began to  
 fear Alcibiades,  
 lest afterwards  
 he should  
 repay their  
 ingratitude in  
 kind,

And of assent tabreggen his lyff daies,  
 Thei ageyn hym of malis han conspired,  
 Afftir his exil, to maken no dellaies

3620 and conspired to  
 murder him  
 after his exile.

3585. this] the B. 3591. ouer ladde R.

3596. disconfiture H. 3604. for] to R.

3608. that] ther R. 3611. ther] be H.

3619. aquite] aquiete R.

3606. of] om. H.

For tacomplisshe that thei long han desired,  
 With brennyng hate ther hertis falsli fired, 3624  
 To moordre benvie, causeles ageyn [al] riht,  
 Alcibiades, the noble worthi kniht.

Thus the day  
 of his death  
 approached.  
 No prince can  
 provide  
 against  
 false con-  
 spirators.

Thus the tyme approchid and the date,  
 Term afforn set be constellacioun 3628  
 Of his parodie and his lyuys fate,  
 Which was concludid, as maad is mencion,  
 Bi cruel moordre to his destruccioun.  
 Alas, what prince, with gold or soudiours, 3632  
 May hym prouide geyn fals conspiratours!

He was pursued  
 constantly from  
 place to place,  
 and his enemies  
 finally fell upon  
 him at night  
 and burned  
 him in his bed.

Fortune of newe gan at hym enchace;  
 From hir treynys that he nat scape myhte,  
 Daili pursuede fro place ay onto place, 3636  
 Thoruh Perse and Mede, thouh he wer out of siht.  
 Til that his enmyes fill on hym be nihte,  
 Slepynge, alas, to soone thei wer sped:  
 Whan thei hym fond, thei brente hym in his bed. 3640

It was too  
 horrible a  
 deed,—  
 such a good  
 knight to be  
 taken in his  
 bed and con-  
 sumed by fire!

Thus be moordre ther purpos\* was acheuyd, —  
 Alas, it was to horrible a deede,  
 So good a kniht, so weel in armys preuyd,  
 So renommede, so famous in manheede, 3644  
 For to be brent among the coles rede!  
 First vnwarli in his bed Itake,  
 And so consumyd among the smokes blake.

But this was  
 his end; and  
 he flew with  
 two wings to  
 the Palace of  
 Fame.

This was the eende of Alcibiades, 3648  
 Which in knihthod was most souereyne;  
 In werre a leoun, and a lamb in pes,  
 As Mars victorious, his fate so dide ordeyne.  
 To famys paleis he fley with wynges tweyne, 3652  
 Sone to Mynerva, to speke of hih prudence,  
 And lik Mercurie be notable elloquence.

¶ An exclamacion of pe deth of Alcibiades.<sup>1</sup>

O Fates, why  
 did you allow  
 him to burn on  
 the red coals?  
 He who had  
 lived so short  
 a term!

**O** FATAL sustren, which span the lyues threede  
 So short a terme; whi dide ye determyne 3656  
 To suffre hym brenne among the coles rede?  
 Ye wer to hasti to breken and ontwyne

3624. ther] the H — falsli] fully R.

3629. and] and of R, H. 3635. From] For R — nat] na R.

3641. purpos ther moordre, correction indicated B.

3647. smokes] coles R. 3652. fleih R.

<sup>1</sup> "Here Bochas makith an exclamacioun vpon the deth of Alcibiades," MS. J. leaf 78 recto.

His web of knihtehod, that thoruh the world\* dide  
shyne,

And caste of noblesse his bemys out most cleer; 3660

Alas, that euer he fill in your daungeer!

O, out on Stix, and out on Attropos,

[p. 189]

Out on Stix  
and out on  
Atropos!

That han of malis slayn so good a kniht!

Out on you thre, that keepe your-silff so cloos, 3664

Out on you,  
three daughters  
of the dark  
Night! Out on  
you, Lethel!

Douhtres Icallid of the dirke niht!

And thou, Letum, that queyntest eek the liht

Of Alcibiades, merour & lanterne,

To speke in knihthod how men sholde gouerne, 3668

Ye slen the worthi, & wrechchis ye doon spare!

You slay the  
worthy and  
spare wretches.  
Your funereal  
smokes lay  
realms desolate,  
fostering  
cattiffs and  
letting the  
worthy die.

Torcites lyueth, Ector is slayn in deede,

Your funeral smokis makþ rewmys now so bare,

To race vp\* cedris, ther braunchis may nat sprede, 3672

Ye palle the laurer, ye make the firses seede.

Ful litil thank in kyngdamys ye disserue,

Kaitiffs to fostre, and do the worthi sterue!

Alicibiades is passed into fate,

3676

Alcibiades has  
passed into  
fate; the Parcae  
allowed him to  
die too soon;  
but the Spar-  
tans were glad.

Liht of knihthod lith clipped in the shade;

The Parchas sustren to soone sette his date,

Of hih noblesse to make the laurer fade.

Lacedemoyns\* of his deth wer glade,

3680

Funeral fyr his bodi hath deffied,

For hih prowesse his soule stelledied.

### [¶] Lenvoye.

**A**LAS, this tragedie doth myn herte bleede,

Mi penne quake of routhe & of pite,

3684

Alas, my  
heart bleeds  
when I see  
how insecure is  
the world's  
felicity.

In my writyng whan that I tak heede,

To seen the straunge feerful dyuersite

Of al worldli vnseur felicite,

How from ther sees, shortli to comprehende,

3688

Froward Fortune doth princis doun descende.

Alcibiades, of corage & of manheede,

As is rehersid in bookis ye\* may see,

Of gentillesse and of goodliheede,

3692

Alcibiades,  
most famous of  
goodness and  
beauty, bounty,  
prudence and  
magnanimity,

3659. thoruh the world] the word thoruh B.

3660. bemys] om. H (space left).

3662. O] om. R, P — 2nd out] om. R — Antropos H, Atrapos P, Atrapos J.

3666. Lethum P. 3667. Of] And H. 3672. vp] out B.

3677. lith] lyht R. 3680. Lacedemoyns B.

3681. deffied H, R. 3691. ye] as ye B, H.



Of semlynesse, of fredam & bounte,  
Of hih prudence and magnanymyte  
Was most famous, as auctours hym comende,  
Yit from his seete Fortune made hym descende. 3696

governing  
Athens and  
dreaded by  
all the enemies  
of the city —  
yet when at  
the height of  
his glory  
Fortune made  
him descend  
from his throne.

Al the peeple, bothe of Perse and Mede,  
Whil he gouvernid Athenys the cite,  
Stood in his daunger & gan his suerd to dreede;  
And al that wern rebel to his contre, 3700  
He chastised hem in ther most cruelte.  
But whan his fame gan hiest up tascende,  
Doun from hir\* wheel Fortune made hym descende.

Moordre and tresoun with pretence freendliheed, 3704  
Outward fair cheer, couert iniquite,  
Plesaunce in speche, & vndir that falsheed,  
Hony shad out, sharp tailed lik a bee,  
Song of Syrenes to drowne men in the se, 3708  
In oon combynd, ther malis can extende  
To cause princis doun from ther sees descende.

Noble Princes,  
secure your-  
selves against  
treason, and  
remember in  
your prosperity  
that he who  
sits highest  
is most ready to  
descend.

Noble Pryncis, that seen so moche and reede,  
Remembryng stories of antiquite, 3712  
Afforn prouidyng that tresoun nat procede,  
Beth ay most dreedful in [hih] prosperite,  
Lat othris fallyng a merour to you bee.  
The tourn of Fortune al auctours reprehende, 3716  
Wher who sit hiest is rediest to descende.

¶ A Chapitle of wordly folk wich desire to be magnified.<sup>1</sup>

Worldly folk  
desire above  
all other things  
to have power  
and to climb  
up to the  
highest place in  
wealth and  
reputation.

AFFT[ER] this processe, yif ye list to lere,  
Lich as Iohn Bochas maketh mencion,  
That worldli folk most souereynli desire 3720  
To haue in lordshipe gret exaltacioun,  
And up to clymbe in ther entencioun  
Of worldli worshepe\* to the hiest place,  
Al erthli tresour attonys to enbrace. 3724

3703. hir] his B.

3704. pretence] pretence of H, pretended P. In MS. J, margin (78 recto) opposite this stanza, "a notable ver[ity]," written in a seventeenth century hand.

3721. lordshipe] worshipp H.

3723. worshepe] worshepes B, R 3, princis H.

<sup>1</sup> "Here Bochas writeth ageyn the desires of the people," MS. J. leaf 78 recto.

The feruent flawme of ther gredi desir[e]s  
 In mekil gadryng fynt no suffisance;  
 Ther hungri etik kyndelethe so the fires  
 Of auarice be long contynuaunce,  
 That her thrust of worldli habundaunce  
 On Tantalus ryuer abraideth euer in oon,  
 Drownid in drynkyng, & deeme ther part is non.

The hot  
 flame of their  
 greedy desire  
 for riches is  
 like the thirst  
 of Tantalus:  
 the more they  
 drink the  
 fiercer their  
 craving; the  
 higher the  
 water the  
 greater their  
 fear of an ebb.

Ther may no tresour ther dropesie weel staunche; 3732  
 The mor thei drynke the mor thei thruste in deede.  
 In Thagus floodis the depper that thei launche,  
 The gretter drynesse doth in ther brestes\* breede.  
 The hier water, an ebbe most thei dreede; 3736  
 Fals indigence ther herte hath so confoundid,  
 At fullest sees thei seeme ther barge is groundid.

Thus ech man wolde to gret richesse atteyne; [p. 190]  
 With suffisaunce but fewe hold hem content; 3740  
 Who most haboundeth, now rather wil compleyne  
 For lak of good — alas, how thei be blent!  
 Wher shal ther gadryng, wher shal ther good be spent?  
 Sum oon par cas\* shal hem therof discharge, 3744  
 Whom thei most hate, & spende it out at large.

Few men are  
 content with  
 enough. The  
 richest com-  
 plain most  
 of poverty,  
 and yet it may  
 be that their  
 money will be  
 taken from  
 them and spent  
 by some one  
 whom they  
 most hate.

Withynne a bodi, but\* litil of stature,  
 Corages growe up to gret magnificence,  
 Which up tascende do ther besi cure, 3748  
 And in ther clymyng & transitorie assence,  
 Hauyng an hope of worldli apparence,  
 Lich as nothyng ther puissaunce myht trouble,  
 Nothyng aduerting how that Fortune is double. 3752

It seems to  
 them as if noth-  
 ing could impair  
 their worldly  
 power; they  
 forget that  
 Fortune is  
 double.

Summe set ther ioie in conquest and in werris,  
 Tenbrace al erthe vndir ther puissaunce,  
 Lik as thei myhte reche aboue the sterris,  
 To brynge down heuene vnto ther obeissaunce. 3756  
 But yif ther poweer wer peised in ballaunce,  
 And countirweied a-riht in ther memorye,  
 Thei sholde weel fynde that al is but veynglorie.

Some are for  
 wars and  
 conquest,—as if  
 they could  
 reach above  
 the stars; but  
 if their power  
 were rightly  
 weighed they  
 would find it  
 only vainglory.  
 What do their  
 luxuries and  
 vicious com-  
 panions avail  
 them?

What may auaille hem ther fethirbeddis softe, 3760  
 Shetis of Reynys, longe, large & wide,

3727. hungri] gredy H. 3735. brestes] hertis B — breede]  
 bleede H.

3740. hold them but fewe R. 3744. par cas] parchas B.

3746. but] ful B, J. 3753. ioie] loyes H.

3756. vnto] to R. 3761. reynes R, Reyns H.

Duyers deuises or clothes chaunged ofte,  
 Or vicious mene walking be ther side, —  
 Void of vertu, ambitious in ther pride, 3764  
 Which causeth princis, be report of swich fame,  
 For ther mysleuyng to han an heuy name.

For their  
 idleness and  
 lust and their  
 support of vice  
 and sustaining  
 of liars, God  
 will not suffer  
 them to last  
 long.

And thus for lak of vertuouse dilligence,  
 Thoruh fals luxure and froward idilnesse, 3768  
 And upon flatereris thoutragous expence,  
 Support of wrong oppressing rihtwisesse,  
 Wher lesyngmongeres haue an interresse,  
 Whom to susteene whan princis do per cure, 3772  
 God wil nat suffre that thei shal long endure.

The office of  
 princes is to  
 maintain riht,  
 to relieve and  
 not oppress the  
 poor and to  
 temper  
 vengeance with  
 mercy.

Offise of princis is to supporte riht,  
 His suerd of knihthod fro wrongis to restreyne,  
 The poore releuyng, toppresse hem nat with myht, 3776  
 His olde seruantes weel preved nat disdeyne,  
 His hasti rigour and his vengauce sodeyne  
 Lat merci tempre, to doom or he proceede,  
 And God shal quite hym whan he hath most neede. 3780

¶ A Chapitle of men doing Such thing as þey be  
 dispo[s]ed to.<sup>1</sup>

Bochas tells us  
 that nothing  
 may avail more  
 to virtue than  
 industry. Each  
 man is glad to  
 do that for  
 which he has  
 most talent.

**M**YN auctour Bochas makth a *rehersaile*,  
 In eschewyng of froward idilnesse,  
 That onto vertu may [no thyng] mor auail  
 Than\* dilligent labour and honest bisynesse; 3784  
 And so concludyng, ful pleyntli dotl expresse,  
 Ech man reioyssheth (this sentence is nat glosid)  
 To doon swich thyng to whiche he [is] disposid.

Some work in  
 astronomy  
 or prove them-  
 selves in war-  
 like deeds, and  
 others rejoice  
 in eloquence or  
 study philos-  
 ophy and  
 poetry.

Summe ha[ue] ioie be heuenli influence 3788  
 To knowe the cours aboue celestiall;  
 And summe of knihthod do ther dilligence  
 To preue themsilff in\* actis marciall.  
 And summe reioisshe, in ther entent fynall, 3792  
 In elloquence, summe in philosophie,  
 Summe, aboue all, to stodie in poetrie.

3763. mene] meyny P.

3768. luxury H. 3774. Thoffice H. 3779. he] ye H.

3783. no thyng] om. R, J, H 5 — may no thyng] nought may P.

3784. Than] Good B, R, J, H 5. 3787. to whiche] as R.

3790. do] to do R. 3791. in] be B. 3793. 2nd in] & in H.

<sup>1</sup> "Here Iohn Bochas spekith ageyn Idelnesse rehercyng how  
 sum men haue ioie in o science and sum in anothir," MS. J. leaf  
 78 verso.

The hardi kniht is seruau<sup>t</sup> to Seynt George,  
 Meuyng of planetis sercheth thastronomeer,  
 Martis smyth laboureth in his forge,  
 Harneis of steel mak[e]th tharmoreer;  
 But the deuisour, be dilligence entieer,  
 Be fressh contreuyng, out of the old entaille  
 Fynt newe deuises of plate & eek of maille.

3796 The knight  
 serves St.  
 George; the  
 astronomer  
 searches the  
 moving of the  
 planets, the  
 armourer con-  
 trives harnesses  
 of steel.

The laboreer set hooli his plesaunce  
 To tilthe of lond in tyme to sowe his greyn,  
 Tencrese his seed be yeerli habundaunce,  
 And that his plouh laboure nat in veyn,  
 Castyng his sesouns of drouht & eek of reyn;  
 And poetis to sitte in ther librarie  
 Desire of nature, and to be solitarie.

3804 The labourer  
 has joy in  
 tilling the land,  
 and poets  
 of their nature  
 desire to be  
 solitary.

Swich as men loue, such thyng bei vndirtake:  
 Fissh or foule or hunte with ther houndis;  
 Summe of wolles sondri clothes make;  
 Be philisophre[s] was founde out first be groundis,  
 And of al studie thei sette out first be boundis,  
 Caused poetes, pleynli to conclude,  
 Out of al pres to lyue in solitude.

3808 What men love,  
 they undertake,  
 — to fish or  
 fowl or hunt,  
 to be tailors  
 or philosophers;  
 but poets must  
 live in solitude.

Logiciens delite\* in argumentis, [p. 191]  
 Philosophres in vertuous lyuyng,  
 And legistris, folwyng the[r] ententis,  
 Gretli reioisshe in lucre and\* wynnyng.  
 Phececiens trauaile for getyng\*;  
 And of poetis, this the sotil fourme,  
 Be newe invencioun thynges to transfourme.

3816 Logicians  
 delight in argu-  
 ment, phi-  
 losophers in  
 virtuous life,  
 legists and  
 physicians in  
 lucre and gain,  
 and poets in  
 transforming  
 things by new  
 invention.

Poetis sholde esche[w] al idilnesse,  
 Walke be ryuers and wellis cristallyne,  
 To hih mounteyns a-morwe ther cours up dresse,  
 The mist deffied whan Phebus first doth shyne,  
 Studie in bookis of moral disciplyne,  
 Nothyng coueite, but sette ther entent,  
 With moderat foode for to be content.

3824 Poets should  
 walk by crystal  
 springs and  
 climb high  
 mountains at  
 sunrise; they  
 should study  
 hard and be  
 content with  
 moderate food.

3797. Marcis R.

3798. Harneis] hands H. 3808. and] om. H.

3809. Swich] Suche R, H.

3810. hunte] huntyng H, to honten R, to hunten J.

3816. delite] delite hem B.

3818. folwyng] folwen H — ther] the J, H 5, R.

3819. and] and in B, H, R 3, H 5.

3820. getyng] wynnyng B. 3825. up] om. R.



Their chief labour is to reprove vices, not to be rudely offensive or to injure men, but always to conclude with virtue.

Ther cheeff labour is vices to reprove  
With a maner couert symylitude,  
And non estat with ther langage greeve 3832  
Bi no rebukyng of termys dul and rude;  
What-euer thei write, on vertu ay conclude,  
Appeire no man in no maner wise:  
This thoffise of poetis that be wise. 3836

¶ A chapitle of þe gouernance of Poetis.

Poets should be secluded from the tumult of the world and live according to their means and by the support of princely patrons.

**T**O descryue the disposicioun  
Of al poetis be old ordynaunce, —  
Thei shold be quiette fro worldli mocion,  
And it sequestre out of ther remembraunce, 3840  
Fare compotent vnto ther sustenaunce,  
Drynk wyn among\* to quike ther dilligence,  
Support of princis to fynde hem ther dispenche.

They have neither land nor wealth; and when their purses are empty they fail in countenance. The support of princes is the best recompense of their sorrows.

For thei that lakke lond & pocessioun, 3844  
And can of lucre no maner cheuisaunce,  
Ther coffres void, ther purs turnid up-so-down,  
And wante vitaille to fynde hem in substaunce,  
Ther corage dullith, thei faile contenaunce, — 3848  
What mihte beste ther sorwes recompence?  
Support of princis to fynde hem ther dispenche.

Lords have power, churchmen gold, knights and merchants are well able to look out for themselves, but poor poets now-a-days may go begging.

Lordis in erthe ha[ue] domynacioun;  
Men of the cherche of gold haue habundaunce; 3852  
The kniht get good[e] thoruh his hih renoun;  
Marchauntis with wynnyng ha[ue] souereyn aqueyn-  
taunce:

But [poor] poetis (God sheeld hem fro myschaunce!)  
May now-adaies for ther impotence, 3856  
For lakke of support go begge ther dispenche.

Dante, Virgil, Petrarch, Chaucer, — all prospered; for they had the support of princes.

Daunt in Itaille, Virgile in Rome toun,  
Pétrak in Florence hadde al his plesaunce,  
And prudent Chaucer in Brutis Albion 3860  
Lik his desir fond vertuous suffisaunce,  
Fredam of lordshepe weied in ther ballaunce,  
Because thei flourede in wisdam and science,  
Support of princis fond hem ther dispenche. 3864

3831. a] om. R.

3837. *This chapter (lines 3837-3871) is omitted in H, R, J, H 5, R 3.*

3842. among] competent B.

3855. poor is supplied from MSS. R 2, H 3, H 4.

O welle of fredam, enclyne thyn eris doun,  
 And of thi bounte yiue sum attendaunce,  
 To heere of merci my supplicacioun,  
 In releuyng of myn hertis greuaunce;  
 Oppressid with pouert, & kan no purueiaunce,  
 Sauff to resorte to thi magnificence,  
 Onli be support to fynde me my dispence!

O well of  
 generosity,  
 incline thine  
 ears to hear  
 my suppli-  
 cation;  
 3868 oppressed with  
 poverty,  
 through thy  
 magnificence  
 only can I find  
 my means of  
 support.

[How Malleus Duk of Cartage for oppressioun  
 tyrannye was hewen in to pecys.] <sup>1</sup>

WHAN Bochas hadde rehersed of poetis,  
 Ther straunge studie & ther soley<sup>n</sup> writyngis,  
 And ther desirs of solitarie seetis,  
 In plesaunt placis to make ther duellyngis,  
 Beside ryuers & holsum welle spryngis,  
 Which acomplissed, he gan his penne auauance,  
 Pryncis off Affrik to putte in remembraunce.

3872 After John  
 Bochas (and  
 John Lydgate)  
 had told of  
 poets and their  
 desire to live  
 alone in pleas-  
 ant sur-  
 roundings, he  
 3876 began to write  
 about princes of  
 Africa,

And whil he dede his besi dilligence  
 Ther pitous fallis to putte in memorie,  
 First ther cam tweyne vnto his presence,  
 Ther old noblesse appallid & ther glorie,  
 Which, as hym sempte, withyne a teritorie  
 O[f] Affrik boundis, longyng to Cartage,  
 Dide first appeere, most dedli of visage.

two of whom,  
 Machæus, duke  
 3880 of Cartage,  
 and Cartalus,  
 his son,  
 appeared in his  
 presence.

The ton of hem was named Malleus,  
 Duk of Cartage, of Affrik lord and sire.  
 His sone also calld Cartalus,  
 Whilom cheef prince & bisshop eek of Tire.  
 But Malleus, which heeld the gret empire  
 Of al Affrik, for his pompous outrage  
 Exilled was for euere out of Cartage.

Machæus was  
 3888 exiled for his  
 outrageous con-  
 duct and sought  
 revenge.

Which caused hym in herte he was nat murye, [p. 192]  
 But ay remembrid upon his fel banshyng,  
 Gadred his peep<sup>le</sup> withynne the lond of Surrye,  
 And in the feeld, whil he lay hosteieng,  
 Cast hym fulli to make no tarieng,  
 But in al haste, of knihtli fel corage,  
 Mauge his enmyes resorte onto Cartage.

3892 Raising an army  
 in Syria, he  
 resolved to  
 return to  
 Cartage in  
 spite of his  
 3896 enemies.

3879. his] this R.

3882. ther] the H.

3894. upon] on H.

3886. 90. Manlyus H, Macheus P.

3898. al] al þe H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 79 recto.

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He sent for his son, who was prince and bishop of Tyre, to come and help him with all the chivalry of his town; but as it was then the time for sacrifice to Hercules, Cartalus preferred to offend his father rather than neglect the gods.

His father was very angry.

and venomous tongues made matters worse, for no poison is more baneful than the hateful violence of slander.

The festival over, the bishop went at once to his father. He did not even stop to change his clothes.

Tauenge his exil his herte was set affire,

3900

And his entent[e] mor to fortefie,

He sente in haste his lettres down to Tire,

To Cartalus, that he sholde hym hie,

3904

And brynge with hym al the cheualrie

Of his cite, in steel armyd cleene,

His fadres parti to holde up and susteene.

But whan this bisshop knew hooli the maneer

3908

Of this purpos, which ye han herd deuise,

He considred how that tyme of the yeer

Ordeyned was to do sacrefise,

Aftir the rihtis of ther paynym wise,

To Hercules, which in that cite

3912

About al goddis hadde the souereynte.

Whos feeste was holde space of certeyn daies,

Which for to halwe he needis must entende,

3916

And bi the custum make no dellaies,

But that he muste therto condescende.

And leuer he hadde his fader to offende,

As in swich caas, than thoruh neccligence

3920

Vnto his goddis for to doon offence.

Wherof his fader hadde indignacioun,

The caas arettyng to vnkyndenesse,

And therof kauhte a gret occasioun

3924

Ageyn his sone, of froward wilfulnesse:

For princis ofte, of furious hastynesse,

Wil cachche a qu[a]rel, causeles in sentence,

Ageyn folk absent, thouth ther be non offence.

And summe tungen venymous of nature,

3928

Whan thei parceyue that a prince is mevid,

Tagregge his\* ire do ther besi cure,

With fals langage to maken hym mor grevid.

But ther is no poisoun so weel expert nor previd 3932

As is of tungen the hatful violence,

Namli whan princis list\* yiue hem audience.

The feeste acomplissched of myhti Hercules,

3936

Al innocent of double or fals meenyng,

The said[e] bisshop, of wil nat rek[e]les,

3903. Tartalus J. 3908. Of] & H. 3911. wise] guyse H.  
 3914. was] wast R. 3917. therto] for to H.  
 3925. of] in H. 3930. his] ther B. 3934. list] wil B.  
 3936. Al] An R.

Kam to his fader withoute mor tarieng,  
 Chaungid nouthur habit nor clothyng,  
 With al thesignes, & in the same wise  
 As he toforn hadde doon his sacrefise.

3940

Anon his fader made no delay,  
 Withoute excus, it wolde be no bet,  
 Of hasti rancour, the silue same day  
 Maad hym been hangid upon an hih gibet.  
 Lawe an[d] iustise wer bothe aside set,  
 And tiranye, most furious & wood,  
 To do vengauce in trouthis place stood.

3944

But on the  
 same day his  
 father had him  
 hanged on a  
 gibbet.

3948

Who can or may tirauntes wil descryue,  
 Whos marcial suerdis be whet ay for vengauce?  
 Ther bloodi thrustis doth thoruh ther hertes ryue,  
 Ther eris ay open to heere of sum myschaunce,  
 Ther furious merthe, ther mortal wood plesaunce,  
 Ther pale smylyng, ther lauhtr of fals hatreede,  
 Concludeth euere upon sum cruel deede.

Who can  
 describe the  
 will of tyrants,  
 — their furious  
 mirth, their pale  
 smiling and  
 laughter of false  
 hatred!

Thei been mynistris to Parchas sustren thre,  
 Tuntwyne the threedis of folkis heer mortall,  
 And verray cosyns, thoruh hasti cruelte,  
 Vnto the woode Furies infernall,  
 Children to Pluto, of vengauce marciall,  
 Which for ther vices, but thei bere hem weel,  
 Shal tourne in helle on Ixiones wheel.

3956

Ministers of the  
 Parce, cousins  
 of the Furies,  
 children of  
 Pluto, they will  
 turn in hell on  
 Ixion's wheel  
 for their vices.

3960

Thus Malleus, fader most vnkynde,  
 Lik swich a tirant, shad out his cruelte,  
 As ye han herd; and aftir, as I fynde,  
 Of furious herte and of old enmyte,  
 Be force is entrid Cartage the cite,  
 And slouh al tho in his hatful ire,  
 That hym afforn had exiled into Tire.

3964

Thus  
 Machæus first  
 slew his son,  
 and then  
 entering Car-  
 thage murdered  
 all those who  
 had caused his  
 exile.

3968

Wrouhte aftir wil and nothyng aftir riht,  
 Gan robbe and spoille that noble famous toun,  
 Which made hym hatid in the peeplis siht  
 For his outrage and gret extorsioun,  
 Hauyng no ioie nor consolacioun

3972

He robbed and  
 spoiled until  
 he was hated  
 by the people,  
 whom it was his  
 joy to oppress.

3941. his] om. R. 3949. wil] weel R.

3951. thrustis] thyrst P, trustys H 5, thristis R 3.

3960. Childre R, H. 3963. Manleus H, Macheus P.

3966. 2nd of] om. R. 3967. of Cartage R.

3969. afforn] om. H. 3972. peeple R. 3973. For] for by H.



Withynne his herte, pleynli, nor gladnesse,  
Sauf lik a tiraunt the peple to oppresse. 3976

They bewailed  
their misfor-  
tune; and  
Bochas says, that  
the lordship of  
princes who  
climb up fast  
to riches  
through pillage  
will not last  
long.

The peple of Cartage sore gan to pleyne [p. 193]  
Vpon ther mischeeff and desolacioun.

And Bochas writ, rehersyng in certeyne,  
Wil is a stepmooder of witt & of resoun; 3980

And wher that princis ha[ue] domynacioun,  
And bi fals pillage to richesse clymbe up faste, —  
Trusteth riht weel, ther lordshipe may nat laste.

Their wealth and  
worldly dignity  
are of no help  
to them if they  
are tyrants; for  
lordship is the  
love of a well-  
ordered peple.

Ther grete poweer of worldli excellence, 3984  
Nor ther acrochyng of temporal richesse,

Whan thei be tirauntes, may stonde in no diffence,  
And froward wil[le] reuleth ther hihnesse.

For what is lordshipe, pleynli to expresse, 3988  
In this world\* heer, yif it be discernid? —

Loue of the peple whan thei be weel gouernid.

Tyranny and  
oppression  
engender hatred;  
and when the  
peple cease to  
fear him, a  
prince is but  
a man alone.

For tirannye and fals oppressioun  
Causeth princis to stonde in gret hatreede. 3992

And what is worth ther domynacioun,  
Withoute loue lat preue it at a neede?

Men for a tyme may suffre hem weel & dreede;  
But whan that dreed constreyned is & goone, 3996  
Than is a prince but a man allone.

Machæus is  
a good example;  
for finally the  
peple rose and  
tore him in  
pieces.

Seeth an exauple how Malleus of Cartage,  
For al his castellis & tour[es] maad of stonis,  
For his oppressioun, vengauce and outrage, 4000

The peple of Affrik ros on hym al attonys,  
And hew assonder his flessch & eek his bonys,  
Caste hem pleynli, on hym thei wer so wood,  
Vnto ther goddis to offren up his blood. 4004

His subjects  
thought that  
no offering was  
more acceptable  
to their gods  
than the blood  
of tyrants.

The peple dempte, of mortal cruelte,\*  
Ther was non offryng so plesaunt nor couenable  
Vnto ther goddis to plesse ther deite, 4008

As blood of tirantes, which that be vengable.  
Thus cruel princis make the peple vnstable

Of necessite, which ouhte be compleyned,  
To wreke ther wrongis that thei be constreyned.

3977. pleyne] compleyn R. 3983. riht] om. H.

3984. Ther] The H. 3985. Nor] To R. 3989. world]  
word B.

3994. it] om. H. 3997. a man but R. 3998. Manlyus H.

4005. cruelte] equite B.

Loo, heer the eende of Malleus the tiraunt,  
Which doth to princis ful weel exemplefie,  
To God aboue how it is nat plesaunt  
Them to delite in no swich robberie,  
Nor pile the peeple be no fals tyrannye,  
Nor for no talis be hasti of vengauce;  
For al swich thyng to God is displesaunce.

4012 The fate of  
Macheus  
shews that God  
is not pleased  
with kings  
who rob and  
oppress their  
people.

4026

## ¶ Lenvoye.

RAD and considred, this saide tragedie  
Sheweth to princis a merour ful notable,  
How thei ther rigour shal tempere & modese  
Or thei proceede for to be vengable:  
For in a prince it is riht comendable,  
Rancour of herte, of cheer & of corage  
For to differre til that ther ire aswage.

4020 This tragedy  
teaches that  
princes should  
temper their  
rigour.

4024

Ther hasti\* ire, [ther] sodeyn malencolie,  
The[r] colerik fumys, ther furie vnrestreynable,  
Ther vnqueynt fires of flawme of tyrannye,  
Ther fretyng etik of hate incomparable,  
Lik bestial tiges, lik leouns vntretable,  
Ne wil nat suffre ther infernal rage  
Differre ther doomys til ther ire asswage.

4028 In their hasty  
anger and un-  
restrained fury  
and hate they  
are like tigers.

4032

The roial leoun, of mortal gent[e]rie,  
Among beestis of force incomparable,  
Preueth nat his poweer nor his regalie  
Geyn beestis prostrat, which be nat defensable.  
And myhti princis sholde, in caas semblable,  
For innocentes take merci in morgage,  
Respytyng rigour til ther ire asswage.

4036 The lion does  
not prove his  
might on de-  
fenceless  
creatures.  
Princes should  
follow his  
example.

Ther sparle of vengauce is quiked in partie  
Be wyndis foure, fell and abhominable:  
Blast of detraccioun, & blast of flaterie,  
Blast of fals rowneris, that forge many a fable,  
And blast of bribours, most vicious & coupable,

4040 Detraction,  
flattery, deceit,  
and extortion  
fan the flame  
of their rage.

4012. Manlyus H. 4016. fals] om. H.

4026. hasti and sodeyn are transposed B — 1st Ther] The H.

4027. 1st Ther] The H, R 3 — 2nd ther] the J, pe H.

4029. etik] fretyk R. 4030. intretable R.

4031. ther] that R.

4034. beestis] al beestis H. 4038. Innocence H.

4044. blast] bast R — coulpatible R, H.

With smoki sclaudris & felenous fals visage,  
Causeth ire of pryncis that it may neuer aswage.

Let princes  
beware of lying,  
slanderous  
tongues.

For which lat princis, of noble policie  
Bewar of tungis double and deceyuable, 4048  
Which with ther venym infect ech companye,  
Ther poynaunt poisoun is so penetrable;  
To folk absent it is myscheuable,  
So deepe fretith ther serpentyn langage, 4052  
Causyng in princis ther ire may neuer asswage.

Let virtue,  
noble Princes,  
magnify your  
high estates  
and make you  
merciful.

Noble Pryncis, lat vertu magnefie  
Your hih estatys to make you merciable;  
For moral Senec doth clerli specefie, 4056  
The throne of princis be clemence is maad stable.  
Vengauce delaied, to God is agreable;  
And hasty rigour doth outragous damage,  
Whan humble requestis your ire may nat aswage. 4060

[How the substaunce of the host of himilcho duke  
of Cartage goyng to conquere Cicile died of  
pestilens & aftir himsilf slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

Himilco, duke  
of Carthage, was  
sent to conquer  
Sicily.

AFFTIR these noble myhti princis tweyne, [p.194]  
Next in ordre, with pale & ded visage,  
Toforn Iohn Bochas Himilcho gan compleyne  
Thunhappi fall of his fatal passage, 4064  
Whan he was sent bauctorite of Cartage  
To conquere, thoruh his myhti puissaunce,  
The lond of Cecile vnto ther obeisgance.

The Carthagin-  
ians believed  
that such high-  
handed pro-  
ceedings were  
lawful;

Thei of Cartage hadde an oppynyoun, 4068  
That it was leeful, aftir ther entente,  
Withoute title of riht or of resoun,  
Ther teritories & boundis to aumente.  
And for that cause Hymylco thei\* sent, 4072  
The mihti duk, ther noblesse to auauunce,  
Which off Cartage hadde hool the gouernaunce.

so their duke set  
out over the sea  
with a great  
army.

And for he muste passen bi the se  
Toward Cecile, this noble worthi kniht, 4076  
With hym he lad[d]e a ful gret enarme

4045. felenous] felons J. 4053. ther] þat H.  
4063. hymiliche R, Amilco P. 4071. taugment R.  
4072. cause] cas H — thei] forth was B.  
4076. this] the R — worthy noble H.

<sup>1</sup>MS. J. leaf 79 verso.

Chose out of Cartage, in steel armyd briht,  
 Ther foon to conquere of verray force & myht.  
 But Fortune gan at hym so disdeyne,  
 That to his purpos he neuer myht atteyne.

4080

Ground & gynnyng of his destruccioun,  
 To be remembrid shortli in sentence, —  
 Ther fil of thair a gret corrupcioun,  
 Which that caused a ful gret pestilence  
 Among his meyne, be vnwar violence,  
 And sodeyn myscheef that is upon hym fall, —  
 He loste almost his worthi knihtis all.

4084

But Fortune  
 so corrupted the  
 air that almost  
 all his soldiers  
 died from  
 pestilence,

4088

Nih al his peeples was slayn in that moreyn,  
 That with a fewe beleft of his meyne,  
 Infortunat he turnede is ageyn  
 Hom to Cartage; and thei of the cite,  
 Al causeles, of hasti cruelte,  
 Hath slayn ther duk, as Bochas doth compile.  
 Loo, who may truste Fortune any while!

4092

and, returning  
 home to  
 Carthage,  
 Himilco was  
 slain by his  
 subjects.

[How heynon duc of Cartage was dismembrid.]<sup>1</sup>

AFFTIR whos deth anon *þer* gan succede  
 A mihti duk *þat* callid was Haynoun,  
 Which purposed for to chaunge in deede  
 His name of duk, bi fals ambicioun,  
 And to be callid thoruhout the myhti toun,  
 Kyng of Cartage; and therupon of pride  
 To fynde out weies he felli gan prouyde.

4096

Hanno, duke of  
 Carthage,  
 wished to be  
 king,

4100

He was nat content a duk men sholde hym calle,  
 But of Cartage for to be namyd kyng,  
 And lik his purpos that it sholde falle,  
 Fro day to day the menys compassyng,  
 How he myht fulfille this vnkout[h] thyng,  
 For to be crownid an[d] regnen in that lond.  
 And atte laste this mene weie he fond:

4104

and day  
 by day sought  
 means to fulfil  
 his ambition.

4108

4085. that] *om.* R.4091. turnede] *turny* H.4094. ther] *this* R.

4097. Hannon P.

4100. the] *that* R.4108. crownid] *crowned* kyng R.<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 80 recto



He had a  
young daughter  
whom he in-  
tended to give  
in marriage to  
the son of a  
senator,

He hadde a douhtir yonge & tendir of age,  
Which of the peeples stood in gret fauour;  
And he hym caste to yiuue hir in mariage  
To a yong kniht,\* sone of a senatour,  
Which in the cite was a gret gouernour.  
And that his purpos myhte been atteyned,  
Day of the mariage & tyme was ordeyned.

4112

4116

and arranged for  
the occasion a  
royal banquet,

And in his paleis, cheeff and principal,  
This saide duk leet make his ordenaunce  
To holde a feeste ful solempne & roial,  
And with gret costis made his purueiaunce  
Of sondry deyntes, which that in substaunce  
Wer necessarie in alle maner thyng  
Vnto the feeste of a worthi kyng.

4120

to which he  
invited all the  
senators,

He gaf in charge vnto his purueiours,  
That al wer redi ageyn a certeyn day;  
And to his feeste cam al the senatours  
Duelyng in Cartage; ther durste no man\* sey nay.  
And of his purpos to make no delay,  
Thouh his fraude was nat apparceyued,  
He caste that day summe sholde be deceyued.

4124

4128

meaning to  
poison them;  
for he knew  
that they  
would never  
consent to make  
him king.

He conceyued in his inward entent,  
He to be kyng and regnen in Cartage;  
The senatour[e]s wolde neuer assente  
To chaunge ther custum nor ther old vsage.  
He durste theroff vtter no langage,  
Kepte hym secre withoute noise or soun,  
And fulli caste hym to proceede bi tresoun.

4132

4136

The nexte weie, he knew no bettir reed  
To his desir, than pleyntly to ordeyne  
That of Cartage the senatours wer ded;  
Than wer he likli his purpos to atteyne  
For to be crownid lord and souereyne,  
So tacomplysshe his luste in alle thyng,  
And in Cartage to regne as lord & kyng.

4140

4144

4113. kniht] a kniht B. 4114. gret] om. R.

4119. holde] helde R.

4121. Of] & H. 4124. in] a R.

4126. feeste] festis H.

4127. no man] non B, R, J, H 5, R 3.

4130. that day that R.

4133. neuer nat H.

4139. ban to his desire pleyntly H.

4142. For] om. H.

For yif the senat wer uttirli destroyed,  
 He sholde fynde no maner resistance,  
 Werbi his purpos sholde been encloied,  
 Nor dur sei nay to his magnificence;  
 For in the poraille ther was no diffence.\*  
 And at this feeste he caste hym to proceede  
 Al his entent[e] to conclud in deede.

His officeris he made to be sworn  
 To helpe destroye falsli be poisoun  
 The senatours, of whom I spak toforn,  
 And that ther vitaille & deyntes in foisoun,  
 And eek ther wyntes, for short conclusioun,  
 Sholde with venym been intoxicat,  
 Thoruh al the paleis, & spare non estat.

These officeres hadde a conscience  
 For tacomplisshe so horrible a thyng;  
 And secreli vnder gret providence  
 To the senat thei gaff therof warnyng.  
 And whan thei knew this mortal compassyng  
 Off duk Haynoun, teschewen al affray,  
 Thei putte the weddyng of prudence in delay.

Wherof this duk gan haue suspicioun,  
 And of this mateer fill in a maner dreede;  
 Thouhte he wolde bi sum collusioun  
 Ageyn Cartage mor mortalli proceede,  
 And gan calle to helpe hym in his neede  
 Of Mauritayne a kyng of gret renoun,  
 With hym bi force to falle upon the toun.

Made hym promys, to his auauntage,\*  
 For to make free destrubucioun  
 Of [the] richessis, tresour and pillage,\*  
 Which that he myht fynde\* in the toun.  
 For vttir fyn of his entencioun  
 Was to destroye, of wilful[ly] cruelte,  
 The famous Cartage, the myhti strong cite.

[p. 195] Once they were  
 destroyed, there  
 would be no  
 one left in  
 authority to  
 oppose his  
 wishes.

4148

4152 He informed  
 his servants of  
 his intention  
 and instructed  
 them to put  
 poison in the  
 food and wine;

4156

4160 but their con-  
 science forbade  
 them to do  
 such a horrible  
 thing, and they  
 warned the  
 senators,

4164

4168 who caused the  
 wedding to be  
 delayed.  
 Hanno became  
 suspicious and  
 allied himself  
 with the king of  
 Mauretania,

4172

promising him  
 a share of the  
 pillage of the  
 town,

4176

4148. dare H.

4149. difference] difference B.

4150. this] the R.

4155. that] om. H — in foisoun] infuson R, bi foisoun H.

4161. secretly H.

4173. auauntages B, R, H, H 5.

4175. richesse H — pillage] pillages B, J, P, H 5, H, R, R 3.

4176. myht fynde] fyndep B.

and strengthen-  
ing his forces  
with the rifferaff  
of Carthage, re-  
tired to his  
castle.

Of al the thrallis in the toun duellyng, 4180  
And swich as wer[e] born of lough lynage,  
To strengthe his parti, this was his werkyng:  
He made hem alle, bi mortal fals outrage,  
Withynne the myhti castell of Cartage 4184  
To keepe hem cloos, of malis & envie  
Ageyn the cite hymself to fortefie.

But it was all in  
vain: the  
senate held the  
king of Maure-  
tania in check,  
and, overcoming  
Hanno and his  
churls,

But al for nouht: the myhti senatours  
Therof wer ware,\* and of hih prudence 4188  
Ageyn\* his malis and al his fals robbours  
Thei made hem strong, and thoruh ther prouidence,  
In especial tordeyne a diffence,  
First on ther parti to lette the komying 4192  
Of Mauritayne the stronge cruel kyng.

And of assent thei list[e] nat dellaye,  
But roos attonys, and bi gret ordenaunce  
Ther false duk to venquisshe and outraie, 4196  
Hym and his cherlis thei brouhte to vttraunce,  
Fill upon hym with a gret puissaunce,  
And fynalli, procedyng off resoun,  
This was his doom, bauys of al the toun: 4200

stripped him of  
his garments and  
hewed him in  
pieces.

First, of this duk as it is remembrid,  
He was dispoilled, his doublet eek vnacid,  
Ioynt fro ioynt hewen and dismembrid,  
And from his hed his eyen out arraced. 4204  
And riht as he hadde afforn compassid  
To haue destroyed his owne myhti toun,  
As ye han herd, [he] resceyued his guerdoun.

#### ¶ Lenvoye.

Thus these two  
rich and mighty  
princes of  
Carthage were  
slain. The one  
without cause,

**T**HIS tragedie doth pitousli compleyne, 4208  
And maketh a maner lamentacioun  
Of thes riche myhti princis tweyne,  
Slayn in Cartage, as maad is mencion.  
Causeles the ton,\* sauf bi thoccasioun, 4212  
That pestilence in his froward viage  
Slouh al his peeples, that wer born in Cartage.

4188. wer ware] war B, R, J.

4189. Ageyns B, Geyn J. 4197. chorlis R, Chorlis H.

4205. afforn as he had H. 4210. myhti riche R.

4212. ton] toun B, J, town (om. the) R.

Fortune also gan frowardli disdeyne  
 Ageyn this riche mihti duk Haynoun,  
 Whan he of malis gan mortalli ordeyne  
 The senatours to moordren of his toun,  
 At his feeste bi crafft of fals poisoun,  
 As ye han herd rehersid his outrage.  
 He was ageynward dismembrid in Cartage.

4216 the other for  
 his malice and  
 deceit.

Who doth vengauce, vengauce shal atteyne,  
 In ech estaat, withoute excepcioun,  
 And who of pite vengauce doth restreyne,  
 He shal of merci resceyue the guerdoun:  
 For riht requereth, of trouthe & of resoun,  
 Cruel princis shal haue for ther wage  
 Deth, lik this duk, dismembrid in Cartage.

4220  
 4224 He who does  
 vengeance shall  
 reap vengeance,  
 and he who  
 restrains his  
 hand for mercy  
 shall receive  
 mercy's reward.

Noble Princis, doth your besi peyne [p. 196]  
 For to preserue fro rebelloun  
 The comoun peepel, which stant in noun certeyne,  
 With eueri wynd turnyng up-so-doun.  
 Afftir Fortune thei chaunge affeccoun,  
 Turnyng ther hertis with trist or glad visage,  
 Lik as the peepel dide whilom in Cartage.

4228  
 4232 Noble Princes,  
 do your best  
 to keep the  
 fickle common  
 people from  
 rebellion.

### ¶ Thauctour a-geyn couetous Peple.<sup>1</sup>

NATURE pat is content with lital thyng,  
 The wise, war, be circumspect goddesse,  
 Which vnder God in heuen aboue regnyng,  
 This world to gouerne is callid themperesse,  
 Mooder of richessis, the first founderesse,  
 Which cerchid out bi hir artificeres  
 The straunge tresours hid in the myneres.

4236 The wise  
 Goddess of  
 Nature, empress  
 of the world  
 and mother of  
 wealth, first laid  
 up treasures in  
 mines.  
 4240

This noble ladi, this princesse most famous,  
 Knowyng of man thunkouth condiciouns,  
 Sauh bexperience richessis wer noious, —  
 In hym teclipse the disposiciouns,  
 And conveie his inclynaciouns  
 Bi a wrong weie vertu to sette aside,  
 How couetise was a ful pereilous guide.

4244 She knew the  
 evils of  
 covetousness

4248

4221. He] And H.

4234. or] & R.

4238. above in hevene H. 4239. This] The R.

4247. conveie] conveyne R. 4249. perlious R.

<sup>1</sup> The same heading in J, 80 verso.



and avarice,  
by which men  
are incited to  
delve in the  
earth for treas-  
ure.

For auarise, to al vertu contraire,  
The gredi werm, the serpent vnstaunchable,  
Man to be-traisshe with promyses debonaire, 4252  
At prime face soote and agreable,  
Tauht hym of nature bi craft most deceyuable,  
Thoruh sotil serchyng, as it wer for the nonys,  
First out of erthe to delue precious stonis. 4256

Rich metals are  
sought for and  
ships with their  
broad sails con-  
trived out of  
desire for gain.

Of riche myneris thei serche the entrailles,  
To fynde out metallis for worldli auantages,  
Contryued shippis with ther brode sailles 4260  
Bi dyuers sees to make ther passages.  
And couetise ordeyned first viages,  
Caused princis ride in londis ferre,  
Ech ageyn other for to gynne a werre.

Wars are  
begun for  
avarice; robbery,  
murder, and  
extortion

Off auarice gan first thes robberies, 4264  
Await of brigauntis and al extort pillages,  
Moordre, slauhtre & couert briberies,  
Of old contreuid, furious fel damages,  
Wrouht and acheuid in al maner ages. 4268  
Now in thes daies, lat set it at a preeff,  
Fals couetise caused al swich myscheeff.

spring from  
covetousness,

She was first roote of fals extorsioun,  
To spoile the peeple, mooder of rauyne, 4272  
And sterere up\* of oppressioun:  
To take bi force, this was hir doctrine.  
And as myn auctour doth pleynli determyne  
And concludeth in ful pitous wise, 4276  
Roote of al euil is fals couetise.

the nurse  
of strife,  
mistress of  
wilful violence,  
rebellion and  
the subversion  
of realms.

She was eek norice of contek & of striff,  
Maistresse of moordre and wilful violence, 4280  
Maad men to iupartie boodi, good & lyff,  
Caused discencioun and disobedience,  
Gruchchyng of comouns, withdrauht of reuerence,  
Bi rigerous constreynt sodeyn rebellious,  
Rumour in rewmys, unwar subuersiouns. 4284

4250. to] is to.

4252. promyses] promysse R.

4257. myneris] mines P — serche] serche out H, R, J.

4264. thes] the R. 4265. pillagies R.

4273. up] first B, H 5, R 3, H. (The reading in R, R 2, and Sloane is up).

4278. was] is R, J.

This froward dragoun ful of idropesie,  
Whos fretyng etik ther may no plente feede,  
To staunche his thrust ther is no remedie:  
The mor he drynketh, the mor he hath ay neede;  
And the mor tresour, the mor he stant in dreede,  
With Tantalus thowh he swymme in the floodis,  
In Migdas well pleyne[n]th for lak of goodis.

There is no  
remedy for its  
thirst, though it  
swim in the  
floods with  
Tantalus or live  
in Midas' well.

This werm eek causeth that men in ther richesse  
Haue dreed of theuys a-nyht in ther wakyng;  
And yif thei heere on coffre, bed or presse,  
Cat, rat or mous, or any werm meuyng,  
He weneth anon, withynne hymself deemyng,  
That ther wer kome, with gret apparaille,  
Sum vnkouth pilowr his tresour to assaille.

It causes men  
to fear thieves  
and to start at  
the noise of  
small creatures  
at night, and  
to stand ever  
in despair and  
dread lest their  
possessions fail  
them,—most  
greedy when  
they most  
abound in  
wealth!

The woful soule stondeth euere in dreede,  
And ay abideth in labour & trauaille,  
And of the goodis, which he doth posseede,  
Fallith\* in dispeir list thei wolde hym faille.  
Tween hope and dreed ther is swich a bataille,  
Thoruh entermynyng\* ech other to confounde,  
To be most gredi whan thei most habounde.

4300

Hope vnassurid with dreed[e] dispeired [p. 197]  
Meetyng in hertes make a ful mortal werre.  
Whan hope presumeth, with dreed he is appeired,  
And lik a coward makith hym stonde aferre,  
Dul of his cheer as is a cloudi sterre,  
Which dar nat shewe the liht of his tresour,  
But euer tencrecē set hooli his labour.

Hope and  
Dread meeting  
in hearts make  
mortal war, and  
Hope becomes  
a coward,

4312

He thar nat touche thyng that he loueth most,\*  
His coffres cloos be shet so vndir keye,  
Thowh he hath mekil, he makth therof no bost,  
Lest for his tresour men wolde hym werreie, —  
Pleyne[n]th for neede, lik as he wolde deie,

not daring to  
touch the  
wealth he loves  
above all other  
things, and  
complaining of  
poverty lest he  
be robbed.

4316

4285. dropesye R, hidropsie P.

4287. his thrust] his thrust this thrust R.

4291. Migdas] Midas P — well] wellis H, welth P.

4293. wakyng] walkyng R.

4302. Fallith] Falle B.

4303. a] om. R, P.

4304. entermynyng] vndirmynyng B, (entermynyng J, entymenyng H 5, entremynyng R, entirmynyng H, R 3, interminyng P).

4306. dispeired R.

4307. Meetyng] meevyng H.

4313. thar] dar R, H —most] best B. 4315. have H.

- Feyneth fals pouert to sparen his dispençe,  
Oppressyng plente with froward indigence.
- Though his chests are  
heaped with  
gold, scarcity  
rules his house-  
hold. And thowh his chestis happid be with gold, 4320  
With iren barris faste shet & closid,  
Fals scarsete gouerneth his houshold,  
That be non excesse he is nat vndisposid,  
His indigent herte so streihtli is enosid 4324  
To Herebus heir; and yit weel wers in deede,  
In grettest richesse to compleyne vpon neede.
- His heart is  
bound to  
Erebus, in  
whose iron city  
turns Ixion's  
wheel, under the  
guard of  
Tisiphone; where  
Sisyphus labours  
ever with his  
stone. This Herebus hath of iren, nat of ston,  
For auarice bilt a foul cite, 4328  
Wher-as the wheel tourneth off Ixion  
Vndir the boundis of Thesiphone,  
Wher Zeziphus may neuer a day go fre,  
But with his ston contynuelli trauaileth, 4332  
And the mor besi, his labour lest auaileth.
- Thus auarice, to ve[r]tu most contrarie,  
Founde among vices ful contagious,  
Euer bisi the restles ston to karie, 4336  
Now up, now doun, with weri Zeziphus,  
Whos endles labour braideth on Theseus,  
Which heeld the bridel of frutles bisynesse,  
Condemned in helle to lyue in idilnesse. 4340
- Charon is the  
cruel boatman  
of covetousness,  
who sails the  
flood of Acheron. Off couetise the cruel maryner  
Is callid C[h]aron, whiche with Flegonte,  
Bi many a streiht & many fel daungeer  
Sailleth in the floodis of furious Acheronte, 4344  
Vnder that dirked and cloudi orizonte,  
Wher auarice ches whilom nigardshipe  
For tresoureer his cofres for to keepe.
- The labour of  
covetous men in  
gathering wealth,  
their fear for  
its safety, and  
their sorrow  
when they must  
leave it forever,  
are the three  
heads of  
Cerberus. First to declare the labour in gadryng 4348  
Of coueitous men, as it is in deede,  
And counzirpeise how ther streiht keepyng  
Is euer meynt with importable dreede,  
Sorwe at departyng, for ther mortal meede, 4352  
Which may be callid, of trouthe & equite,  
Of Cerberus the wakir hedis thre.

4320. happid] hepid H, happed R, J, heped P.  
 4324. enosid R, enoisid H. 4325. Erebus P.  
 4330. theophone R. 4331. Sisiphus P.  
 4334. Thus] This H. 4337. up] vp and R.  
 4342. Phlegonte P. 4343. fel] a fell H.

The firste hed is vnstaunchable desir  
 Off worldli goodis gret richessis to atteyne,  
 The mor encres, the hatter is the fyr;  
 The seconde hed is the dreedful peyne,  
 Which in keepyng, his herte doth constreyne;  
 Vnwar departyng, that sodenli doth falle,  
 Is the thridde hed, that greueth most of all.

4356

This waker werm, that berth these hedis thre,  
 Is callid the werm of gredi couetise,  
 Whos bisi constreynt, restles perplexite  
 Troubleþ the soule in ful furious wise.  
 Which froward monstre, pleyntli to deuise,  
 Braideth on Idra, of whom poetis seyn,  
 On hed kit of, ther growe thre ageyn.

4360

And the  
 serpent that  
 bears these  
 three heads is  
 the monster of  
 greedy  
 covetousness,  
 who troubles  
 the soul and is  
 like the Hydra.

4368

Euere at the tail of plente and richesse  
 Of custum folweth gruchchyng & envie;  
 For he that hath of tresour gret richesse  
 Is seelde glad, as for his partie.

4372

Behind wealth  
 follows envy.  
 The rich man  
 is seldom glad.

Thus bothe tweyne stonde in iupartie:  
 The riche with plente halt hym nat appaied,  
 And the nedi with pouert is affraied.

And yit in pouert is ful gret sekirnesse,  
 Which is a tresour that no man wil assaille.  
 And as myn auctour Bochar berth witnesse,  
 Amyclates among[es] the poraille  
 Leued in pes, seur from al bataille,  
 Heeld hym content with swich as God hym sente,  
 Whan riche wer armyd & to the werre wente.

4376

And yet, in  
 poverty is great  
 security.  
 Amyclas lived  
 in peace among  
 the poor, while  
 the rich were  
 armed and  
 went forth to  
 war.

4380

Vertuous pouert stant euer in sekir caas,  
 To wach his hous [he] hath ful litil neede;  
 But proude Pompeie assegid in Duras,  
 For feer of Iulius stood in gret[e] dreede.  
 But peeplis rude take heerof non heede,—  
 Swich as reioysshe hem for to sheede blood,  
 In straunge werris wrongli to gete good.

4384

Proud Pompey,  
 besieged by  
 Caesar, lived  
 in great fear;  
 but rude folk  
 have  
 little dread  
 of such  
 adventures.

4388

Stories olde ful weel reherse kunne  
 Diuers studies of folkis heer mortal,  
 First how Diogenes was content in his tonne,  
 In which he made his loggyng pryncepal,

[p. 198]

Diogenes was  
 more content  
 in his tun  
 than Croesus  
 with his over-  
 flowing coffers;

4392

4356. richesse R. 4379. Amiclas P.  
 4383. sekir] secre R. 4384. ful] but R 3, P.  
 4391. folk R, folke P.



And sauh the cours aboue celestial,  
 Lyued gladdere amonges philisophres,  
 Than kyng Cresus, with al his stuffed coffres. 4396

and, for all his  
 treasure,  
 Sardanapalus  
 came to an evil  
 end. Sophodius,  
 who had but  
 a garden of  
 leeks, was  
 always glad and  
 without fear of  
 robbers.

And yiff men wolde onto mynde call  
 The grete myscheuys folwyng on habundance,  
 And thynk[e] also how Sardanapall,  
 For al his tresour, kam [un]to myschaunce, 4400  
 And how Sophodius, porest in substaunce,  
 Hadde but a gardyn ful of leekis greene,  
 And riht nouht ellis hymseluen to susteene.

This philisophre was euer glad & liht; 4404  
 Ther was no wach maad aboute his tour[e]s.  
 Ful seurli slept he al the longe niht,  
 Hauyng no dreed of theuys ne robbour[e]s.  
 In somer walkyng among the fressh[e] flour[e]s, 4408  
 And in cold wyntir, ful myrili & ofte  
 On drye strauh he lay and slepte softe.

Cincinnatus  
 cleared  
 ditches for a  
 living; content  
 with little,  
 nature was his  
 guide.

Cyncynatus, a poore laboreer,  
 Fowede dikes to gete his sustenaunce, 4412  
 Withoute gruchchyng, euere glad of cheer  
 Bothe in his port & in his contenaunce,  
 Demppte he hadde as moche suffisance  
 To his plesauce, as Cresus kyng of Lide; 4416  
 Content with litil; Nature was his\* guyde.

Assured in his  
 poverty, his  
 heart was at  
 ease. He did  
 not care to live  
 beyond his  
 means.

This poore man, in his pouert assurid,  
 With litil foode, & clothes but a fewe,  
 Hadde hertis ese & gladsum pes recarid; 4420  
 It liked hym nat ouer his hed to hewe.  
 Which thyng conceyued cleerli doth us shewe,  
 That ioious pouert conueied with gladnesse,  
 Gruchchyng auoided, surmounteth al richesse. 4424

And if people  
 considered what  
 they endure for  
 wealth, they  
 would also  
 realize how  
 transitory is all  
 earthly power.

And yif that folk koude considre a-riht  
 Ther pitous sihhes, ther thouhtful bisynesses,  
 Ther woful labours, ther litil slep aniht,  
 Which thei endure for worldli fals richnessis, 4428  
 And of thabidyng, the dreedful sekirnessis, —

4399. Sardnapalle R.

4400. unto] to R.

4410. softe] full soffte R, ful softe J, H 5, ful soft P.

4412. Fowede] Made P — his] om. H. 4417. his] hir B.

4424. auoided] avoyed R — surmountyng H.

4426. thouhtful] rouhtfull R.

4428. fals worldly R.

Which thynges peised and callid to memorie:  
Al erthli poweer is double & transitorie.

And bi stories, which that be credible,  
To preue ther poweer is nat abidyng,  
But, at a poynt, slydyng and fallible:  
Whilom Masmyssa of Munydie kyng,  
That was so mihti, bi record of writyng,  
For feer of Siphax, onli his liff to saue,  
Fledde into mounteyns & hidde hym in a caue.

4432 No worldly  
power is abiding;  
Masinissa, king  
of Numidia, fled  
and hid himself  
in a cave  
for fear of  
Siphax and ate  
4436 roots, while  
Xerxes drank  
blood and  
muddy water to  
staunch his  
thirst.

And ther\* he fond[e] but ful smal vitaille,  
Constreyned narwe of indigence & neede,  
Whan other deyntes, in myscheeff, gan hym faille,  
He gadred rootis and eet hem in his dreede;  
Eek proude Xerxes kyng of Perse and Mede  
Drank blood and water to staunche his gredi  
thrust,

4440

Dreed and trauaille gaff hym so gret a lust.

Yit summe men wolde seyn, of auenture  
Thei wer compellid ageyn ther volunte,  
Thes kynges tweyne, swich myscheeff to endure,  
Maugre ther wil[le], of necessite;

Although, as  
some men may  
say, their  
poverty was  
4448 forced upon  
them by chance,

For casuel chauns rafft hem ther liberte,  
So that the rigour off this\* sodeyn rage  
Cam in be constreynt, and of no corage.

4452

But for al that, folk in ther pouerte  
On grete metis that hemseluen feede  
Ben also strong, as hool and fair to see,  
And also lusti preuid at a neede,  
Vpriht of lymes ther iournes for to speede,  
As long lyued, the cause to expresse,  
Is onli this: thei do non excesse.

nevertheless  
poor folk, who  
live on coarse  
food, are as  
strong and  
4456 long lived as  
one could wish,  
for they commit  
no excesses.

To\* poore men the beste medecyne  
Is due labour with moderat abstynence,  
Good hair in feeldis whan Phebus list to\* shyne,  
Voidyng dirke mystis that cause pestilence;  
Of heuy stomak thei feele no violence,

4460 Labour is their  
best medicine  
and the fresh  
air of the  
fields. They  
need no  
physicians or  
apothecaries.

4464

4430. thyng R.

4435. Masinissa P — Munedy H, Numydye R 3, Numidy P.

4439. ther] thus B.

4446. men] om. H — seyn] fayne R.

4448. myscheeff] om. R. 4451. this] ther B.

4455. as] om. R, J. 4458. the] to R.

4460. To] The B — the] bi R.

4462. list to] doth B — to] om. H.

Thei nat enriche lechis nor poticaries,\*  
Themsilff to saue with vnkouth letuaries.

The rich are  
subject to all  
sorts of diseases;  
they eat between  
meals and live  
unhealthy lives.

But folkis riche werkyn the contrarie,  
Which in hem causeth malladies stronge; 4468

For ther diet[e] eueri day thei varie  
With dyuers metis, and ther sitting longe.  
And with al this, ther appetitis wronge,  
Take out of tyme, which thei may nat endure, 4472  
Which bi custum oppressith ther nature.

Thus Bochas  
says that pov-  
erty borne with  
contentment is  
most secure, and  
that covetous-  
ness with  
extorted wealth  
is the root of  
all evil.

And thus myn auctour, shortli to deuise, [p. 199]  
Seith how glad pouert stant most in sekirnesse.

And of al euel, he seith, how couetise 4476

Is roote & ground, with fals extort richesse,  
Riot annexid, engendryng gret siknesse,  
Theron concludyng, how moderat diete  
Set soule and bodi in temporat quite. 4480

[How Enagora kyng of Cipre was bi Artaxerses  
outraied/ and put from his kyngdam.] <sup>1</sup>

Evagoras, king  
of Cyprus,  
came before  
Bochas with  
eyes blinded by  
weeping;

**F**OLWYNG in ordre the processe of Bochas,  
As he remembreth next in his writyng,  
To hym appeerede, rehersyng þus þe cas,  
Enagora, that was of Cipre kyng, 4484  
His eyen derkid be manyfold weepyng,  
Because he hadde loste that riche lond,  
Which he toforn hadde conquered with his hond.

for he had lost  
his rich kingdom,  
which abounds  
in metals and  
lies far to the  
south.

This lond of Cipre, as maad is mencion,  
Of dyuers metallis is passyngli habounde, 4488  
Hath of richesse gret plente and foisoun;  
And of his siht[e], lik as it is founde,  
It stant fer south, with many hilles rounde, 4492  
And hath also many commodites  
Withynne his boundis off toun[e]s & cites.

4465. poticaries] apoticaries B.

4468. hem] hem silf R.

4474. to] om. R. 4475. how that R.

4478. gret] long R.

4480. temporat] moderat R.

4484. Cipre] Egipt H — Euagoras P. 4485. be] with H.

4487. he toforn hadde] to forn he H.

4491. site J, R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 82 recto.

Touchyng this Cipre I can no mor seie,  
 Of which[e] lond Enagora was kyng,  
 Til he gan prouddli for to werreie  
 With Lacedemonoys, ther parti sustenyng,  
 Geyn Artaxerses; & at ther meetyng  
 The said Enagora was brouht to outraunce,  
 Put from his kyngdam & from al gouernaunce.

4496 I can say no  
 more about it;  
 but Evagoras  
 was conquered  
 by Artaxerxes  
 and put from  
 his realm.

[How Theo kyng of Egipt bi Artaxerses was dryven  
 from his kyngdam and fledde in to Arabie.]<sup>1</sup>

¶ Next Enagora kam the kyng Theo,  
 Of al Egipt long tyme pocessour;  
 And to Iohn Bochas he gan\* declare his wo,  
 How Fortune dide hir froward labour,  
 And from hym drouh hir frenshepe and fauour,  
 And sodenli thoruh hir iniquite  
 She cast this kyng down from his roial see.

4504 Theo, who once  
 ruled all Egypt,  
 declared to Iohn  
 Bochas, that  
 Fortuna  
 wickedly cast  
 him down  
 from his throne,  
 inciting him to  
 make war on  
 Artaxerxes

She list hir malis from hym nat differre,  
 Ne wolde nat suffre hym to lyue in pes,  
 But caused hym to gynne a froward werre  
 Ageyn the said myhti Artaxerses,  
 Wenying therbi taue had a gret ences, —  
 Gadred shippes and made a gret arme  
 In his entent tamette hym on the se.

4508

To Lacedemonois he was fauourable,  
 Sent hem vessellis stuffid with vitaille,  
 Dempte of pride that hymself was able  
 With Artaxerses to holden a bataille.  
 But hasti trust doth foolis ofte faille,  
 For this Theo was aftir anon riht  
 Dryue out of Egipt and Iput to fliht.

4516 in aid of the  
 Spartans.  
 But fools often  
 fail in their  
 hasty con-  
 fidence;

Artaxerses pursuede hym so sore,  
 Toform his face he durste nat appeere, —  
 Fledde in Tarabie, myn auctour seith no more;  
 Ban[y]shed fro Egipt, dedli of face & cheere.  
 And of his fate who-so list to lere,  
 He was depryued fro kyngli dignite  
 And bi Fortune cast from his roial see.

4524 and, beaten, he  
 fled into  
 Arabia.

4496. Euagoras P.

4502. Euagoras P. 4504. gan] gan to B — wo] om. R.

4508. kyng] thyng R — his] hir H.

4515. tamette] to mete H. 4520. often R.

4525. in to Arabye H, J, into Araby R 3, P — no more] nat  
 nomore R. 4528. kyngli] knyhtly H.<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 82 recto. No break in text B.



[How Amynta of Macedoyne kyng had by Erudice  
his wif, Alisaundre, Perdica, & Philip, that were  
slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

Amyntas,  
king of Mace-  
don, grandfather  
of Alexander,  
had four  
children, Alex-  
ander,

AND among other, ther fatis compleynnyng,  
Theruh Fortunis dreedful violence,  
Ther cam Amynta, of Macedoyne kyng, 4532  
And to Iohn Bochas shewed his sentence.  
And to declare his magnificence,  
To Alisaundre graunfader in his liff,  
Hauyng foure childre be Erudice his wiff. 4536

Perdiccas and  
Philip, by his  
wife Eurydice.

The firste of hem was Alisandre Icallid,  
And Perdica namyd the seconde,  
The thridde Phelipp, in Macedoyne stallid,  
Kynge of Grece, lik as it is founde, 4540  
Which in richessis gretli dide habounde,  
And was eek fader, this noble werreour,  
To Alisaundre the myhti conquerour.

Macedon is  
the chief  
of the seven  
provinces of  
Greece

And or myn auctour ferther doth proceede, 4544  
He makth in maner a digressioun  
From his mateer, lik as ye may reede,  
And gynnyth in ordre a descripcioun  
Of Macedoyne, the famous regioun, 4548  
Among Greekis writ in especiall,  
Of seuene provynces it is the princepall.

and stretches  
from the Egean  
Sea to  
Dalmatia.

And so procedyng, he seith how that contre  
Strechchith his boundis aboute hym enviroun 4552  
Toward the se which callid is Egeë,  
Foorth be Achaia toward septemtryoun.  
And to Messie westward it goth doun;  
And who that can bi crafte the coostis caste, 4556  
To Dalmacia the name therof doth laste.

Mt. Olympus  
is in Macedon,  
and it is so  
high that  
neither the wind  
blows nor do  
rains fall on its  
summit.

In Macedoyne, he doth us also lere, [p. 200]  
Of Olympus stant the gret mounteyn;  
And in that kyngdam is many gret mynere 4560  
Of gold and siluer, lik as bookis seyn.  
And on that hill is neuer wynd nor reyn;

4532. Amintas P.

4536. Euridice P. 4538. Perdiccas P.

4541. Richesse H, Riches R 3, P. 4544. doth] do H.

4547, 48 are transposed in B, correction indicated.

4554. septentrioun R. 4557. Dalmatia P.

4562. neuer] nouthir R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 82 recto.

- For thilke mounteyn so hih[e] doth atteyne,  
That it may nouthur blowe ther nor reyne. 4564
- The kyng Amynta, of whom I spak toforn,  
Hadde in Grece many gret bataille:  
Olympiens in Macedoyne born  
And Illiriens, togidre he dide assaille. 4568
- Thoruh his wisdam he dide alway preuail;  
But with his enmys whil he stood most in striff,  
His deth was shapen bi Erudice his wiff.
- Myn auctour Bochas of hir doth diffyne, 4572  
She imagynede his destruccioun,  
Because she hadde another concubyne  
On whom she sette al hir affeccioun.  
Day set and tyme to his confusioun, 4576  
Fulli ordeyned, at a mariage  
He to be slayn bi oon of his lynage.
- He hadde a suster callid Vrione,  
Which prudentli espied the maneere 4580  
Of Erudice, and secreli allone  
Goth to the kyng & told hym al ifeere.  
And as the story in ordre tellith heere,  
Though she failede that day of hir emprise, 4584  
She thouhte fulfille it in a-nother wise.
- This to meene, of hir iniquite,  
Of hir fraude and fals imagynyng,  
She was in cause thoruh hir contrariouste 4588  
Of the destruccioun of this\* mihti kyng.  
For the conclusioun of hir fals werkyng  
Was to ha slayn the kyng & al his lyne,  
She to haue regned with hir concubyne. 4592
- But whan she sauh she myht[e] nat acheeve  
Hir furious purpos bi non auenture,  
Hir venymous malis upon hir lord to preeve,  
On other parties she dide hir besi cure 4596  
Enmytes & myscheuys to procure  
Ageyn the kyng, bi mortal fel assaies,  
With sorwe and trouble for to shorte his daies.

Amyntas fought  
many victorious  
battles against  
the Olympians  
and the  
Illyrians;  
but his de-  
struction  
was plotted by  
Eurydice for  
the sake of  
a lover she had.

Amyntas' sister  
Urione, who  
heard of  
Eurydice's  
intention, told  
Amyntas, and  
although her  
plan failed,  
Eurydice suc-  
ceeded in  
stirring up so  
much enmity  
and strife that  
Amyntas' days  
were shortened.

4565. Amyntas P. 4566. gret] strong H.  
4579. suster] daughter P — Eurione P.  
4580. maneere] mateere H, mateer R 3.  
4581. Euridice P — secretly H. 4582. ifeere] in feere R.  
4583. is misplaced at foot of column R. 4584. day] om. R.  
4587. hir] his H. 4589. this] ther B, R, J, P.  
4591. to slayne H. 4593. ascheve R.

For who can  
escape  
the malice of  
subtile women?

Niht and day his lyff stood euere in dreed, 4600  
Hym to be-tra[i]sshe she cast out hook & lyne.  
And who is he that can or may take heed,  
Freli tescape, teschewen or declyne  
Malis of wommen, whan thei be serpentyne? 4604  
Seeth an exauple in this queen Erudice,  
Void of al vertu and ful of eueri vice.

No prince, alas,  
can learn by  
the experience  
of others not to  
trust himself to  
Sirens.

Alas, no prince can be war be other, 4608  
To bridle ther noblesse with reynes of resoun,  
Swich as commytte, alas, bothe ship & rother  
Vnto Syrenes to rowe hem up and doun  
Thoruhout Caribdis to ther destruccioun.  
Bi craft of Circes, alas, thei wer maad nyce, 4612  
Blynd to remembre upon this Erudice!

Amyntas  
lived in sorrow  
and dread; and  
when he grew  
old he called  
his eldest son  
Alexander to  
the throne, who  
made peace  
with Athens

Which made Amynta to lyue in sorwe & dreede,  
To reste in pes suffred hym ha[ue] no space.  
In thouht and trouble his liff he gan to leede, 4616  
Til be long processe deth hym gan manace;  
Yit or he deide Fortune gaff hym grace,  
His eldest sone bi wisdam to ordeyne,  
Callid Alisandre, his crowne to atteyne. 4620

Thus Alisandre was his successour;  
For Thath[e]nienses gan ther rancour lete  
Ageyn[e]s hym, for [he] with gret labour  
Bi ther suffraunce cam to his roial seete. 4624  
And for to sette his rew in ful quitee,  
First with Athenys, the stronge myhti\* toun,  
Prouided a pes, of hih discrecioun.

and sent his  
young son  
Philip thither  
as a hostage.

And for tauoide al ambiguite 4628  
Of old debatis and of old outrage,  
First he sente into that strong cite  
His sone Phelipp, yong and tendir of age,  
On pes assurid to lyn ther for hostage. 4632  
And in that cite, the story berth witnesse,  
He gan to growe vnto ful hih noblesse.

Philip was  
given into the  
care of  
Epaminondas,  
one of the  
most excellent  
princes of his  
time.

He was commytted to the disciplyne 4636  
Of a gret duk callid Epamynedoun,  
Which to al vertu his youthe made enclyne.  
For of this duk lustyn maketh mencion

4616. he] om. R. 4625. his] this R.  
4626. stronge myhti] myhti stronge B, R, J, P.  
4627. provide H. 4633. that] be H.  
4636. Epaminondon P. 4637. youthe] om. R.

- Bi a maner recomendacioun,  
 Tofor nor aftir, as be his auys,  
 Was neuer no prince mor excellent nor wis.
- 4640
- First he comendith his vertuous corage,  
 His hih noblesse, his knihtli excellence,  
 And be discent he born of hih lynage;  
 And in too thynges concludeth his sentence,  
 Seith that he was of most magnifisence,  
 Egal to Mars be famous cheualrie,  
 And sone to Phebus thoruh hih philosophie.
- [p. 201] Justin says that he was the equal of Mars in chivalry and a son of Apollo through his high philosophy.
- 4644
- And Bochas heer doth his stile auance  
 Ful notabli with excellent langage,  
 And seith no tresour atteyneth in substaunce  
 To thilke richesse, auoidyng al outrage,  
 As whan ther is be bond of mariage  
 Knette up a knotte atween the excellence  
 Of famous kniethod and of Dame Prudence.
- 4648
- And Bochas himself records that no treasure is so great as a bond between knighthood and Dame Prudence.
- 4652
- This knotte auaieth mor than gold in coffre,  
 And is mor glorious perpetuelli tabide,  
 A myhti prince to been a philisophre,  
 Which can be prudence alle vices set aside, —  
 For whan to manhod prouydence is guide,  
 And vertuous force is capteyn in the werre,  
 Lat men weel truste, that parti may nat erre!
- 4656
- It avails far more than gold.
- 4660
- This Epamynoda, of kniethod sustenour,  
 Charboncle of vertu, as bookis telle konne,  
 Of gentil manereſ callid the famous flour,  
 And of hih noblesse a verray worldli sonne,  
 Whos knihtli tryumphes be so hih up ronne  
 To Martis paleis, with the blissid sounes  
 Of Famis trompetis and goldene clariouns.
- 4664
- Epaminondas, flower of gentle manners and son of high noblesse,
- 4668
- For he was callid the briht[e] cleer merour  
 Of rihtful quarellis the parti [to] susteene,  
 Of extort wrongis most iust reformatour,  
 Ay egal iuge, of entent most cleene,  
 Whiche neuer koude nothyng but trouthe meene,  
 Wolde of custum for hate nor alliaunce  
 On nouter parti declyne the ballaunce.
- 4672
- sustained just causes and put wrongs to right. He was an equitable judge and a victorious general who laboured always for the good of the common-weal.
- 4676
4641. nor wis] of price H, of pryce P. 4643. knihtli] vertuous R. 4648. hih] his H. 4649. heer] ther R. 4654. a] the R — the excellence] excellence R. 4663. Epaminondas P. 4669. Famis] famous R, P. 4671. to] om. H. 4673. entent] ente R.



And to comende his vertuous prowesse,  
 His preuyd tryumphes, his magnanymyte,  
 His marcial actis, his knihtli bisynesse  
 In the getyng of many a strong cite, — 4680  
 And al his labour was for the comounte,  
 Which to augmente he wolde neuer cesse,  
 Swich ioie he hadde the comoun good tencrece.

Whatever  
 wealth he  
 obtained he  
 distributed  
 among his  
 followers  
 and set but  
 little store on  
 gold, always  
 ready to  
 assist his  
 soldiers and  
 leaving no  
 treasure behind  
 him when he  
 died.

This was also his vsaunce ouermor: 4684  
 What-euer he gat to parte it in largesse;  
 Of gold nor coign he sette but lital stoor,  
 For al his herte was sette on gentillesse  
 Bi manli fredam, and, pleyntli to expresse, 4688  
 He spared no good, it shewed weel in deede,  
 His trewe seruauantis to helpe hem in her neede.

He kepte nat in coffres his tresour,  
 Of his nature he was so liberall 4692  
 For to releue ech manli soudeour,  
 Swich as wer preued in actis marciall.  
 And for to holde his feeste funeral,  
 Aftir his deth, his story maketh mynde, 4696  
 Thoruh fre departyng ther left no gold behynde.

He extended the  
 liberties of the  
 Greek cities  
 and augmented  
 their territories,  
 seeking nothing  
 for himself, and  
 was throughout  
 his life a  
 student of the  
 sciences.

Alle his offises & famous dignites  
 And gret emprises in his tyme wrouht,  
 Encresid fraunchises thoruh Grece in his cities 4700  
 With libertes bi his prudence out souht  
 For comoun proffit, and for hymself riht nouht,  
 With gret aumentyng of straunge teritories:  
 Al this cam in bi mene of his victories. 4704

And among alle his knihtli excellences,  
 Bi dyuers auctours vnto mynde is brouht,  
 How al his liff he studied in sciences  
 And upon konyng set hooli his thouht. 4708  
 Bi manli prowesse of deth he rouhte nouht:  
 That was shewed, as it is weel founde,  
 The day whan he resceyuede his dethis wounde.

4683. comouns H.

4684. ouermor] euermore R, evirmor H, euermore P.

4698. famous] knyhtly H.

4710. is] was H.

He was hom born vnto his pauyllioun,  
 Al his armure with blood steyned red,  
 And on a couch[e] bi his men leid doun,  
 And gan abraide as he lay half ded:  
 "Sires," quod he, "of o thyng taketh heed,  
 Hath any enmy this day in the feeld,  
 Whan I was woundid, taken up my sheeld?"

And whan his knihtis hadde told hym nay,  
 Bi a maner of knihtli reioysshying  
 He hem comaunded, withoute mor delay  
 To his presence that thei sholde it bryng.  
 And therupon ful pitousli looking,  
 Ful lik a kniht, & with a mortal cheere  
 He kissid it, and seide as ye shal heere:

"Thou wer my felawe in armys [and] my  
 brother,

That neuer woldest my felaship forsake,  
 Seur and abidyng, ther was nat swich a-nother,  
 In eueri iourne that I did vndirtake.  
 To me wolcome, an eende I mut now make.  
 Aftir my deth my soule shal ha[ue] plesaunce,  
 The to be kept yet for a remembraunce."

Afforn his deth[e], it is put in mynde,  
 The same hour, it cam to his memorie  
 To enquere, he lefft nat behynde,  
 "Ha[ue] we," quod he, "this day hadde\* victorie?  
 Or in the feeld who hath the palme of glorie?"  
 He praied his knihtis that day he sholde deie,  
 The pley[n]e[re] trouthe that thei wolde hym seie.

And thei hym tolde platli al the cas,  
 How his parti hadde wonne the feeld of myht;  
 And with that woord he so reioysshed was,  
 That he his sperit yolde anon vpriht.  
 And so he deide lik a worthi kniht,  
 In whom is shewed what vailleth, in sentence,  
 Noblesse of knihtthod ioyned with prudence.

4712 Without fear  
 of death, on the  
 day he received  
 his last wound  
 and was borne  
 with blood-  
 stained armour  
 to his tent, his  
 4716 only question  
 was, "Did my  
 shield fall into  
 the hands of  
 the enemy?"

And when his  
 knights assured  
 him that it had  
 4720 not, he com-  
 manded it to be  
 brought to his  
 presence, and  
 said,

4724

[p. 202] "Thou wert my  
 comrade in  
 arms: after my  
 death it will  
 please my soul  
 to know that  
 4728 thou art  
 kept for a  
 remembrance."

4732

His last  
 question was,  
 "Have we  
 had victory this  
 day?"

4736

4740 And when told  
 that his army  
 had won the  
 field, he died  
 like a worthy  
 knight.

4744

4714. leid] lay H.

4730. welcom R, H.

4736. this day hadde] hadde this day B, H 5 — this day quod  
 he hadde be victorie H, R 3 (om. be) — hadde] had the R.

4737. who hath] had R.

4738. that] the H, P.

4743. vp anoone riht H, anon vpriht B, H 5, R 3, R, J, anone  
 vpright P.

Through  
his teaching,  
Philip (whose  
father was  
slain by his  
mother) grew in  
knighthood and  
virtue.

And bi the mene of his wis doctryne,  
Phelipp, that lay with hym in hostage, 4748  
Gan encrece in knihtli disciplyne,  
Wex in vertu riht as he wex in age.  
Whos fader was be furious outrage  
(Callid Alisandre, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>), 4752  
Slayn bi his mooder be couert fals tresoun.

After Alex-  
ander's death,  
Perdiccas, his  
younger brother,  
came to the  
throne, and he  
too was slain.

Aftir whos deth[e], Perdica in deede,  
The yonger brother, the story doth deuise, 4756  
To the crowne gan lynealli succede;  
Anon slayn aftir in ful cruel wise.  
Swich fals[e] moordre ech man sholde agrise,  
As ye han rad[de], first of Amynta,  
Of Alisaundre and of kyng Perdica. 4760

[Ho[w] the proude tirant Aman was honged and  
the Innocent preserued.]<sup>1</sup>

Haman, a false  
tyrant and an  
Assyrian by  
birth, was chief  
governor under  
Ahasuerus.

THE horrible fall furious for to reede,  
That folweth after of þe gret Aman,  
A ful fals tiraunt found in thouht & deede,  
And was of berthe an Assyrian,\* 4764  
Which, as the Bible ful weel reherse kan,  
Was cheeff maister, as men may ther\* conserne,  
With Assuerus his peeples to gouerne.

His heart was  
swollen with  
pride, and it  
was his pur-  
pose to destroy  
the Jews and  
their law.

His herte was exaltid hih in pride, 4768  
To goddis peeples most contrarious,  
His hatful venym he list nat for to hide,  
But lik a tiraunt most malicious,  
Of wilful rancour, fell and despitous, 4772  
Fulli purposed, and koude hym nat withdrawe,  
To destroye the Iewes and ther lawe.

Granted  
authority, he  
sent out letters  
commanding all  
the people of  
Persia to kneel  
down to him;

To his entent he gat auctorite  
Bi his fals[e] sotil compassyng: 4776  
Sent out lettres into ech contre  
Thoruhout al Perse be bidding of the kyng,  
That hih and low, withynne that lond duellyng, —  
No wiht except, — that peeplis al aboute 4780  
Sholde vnto Aman obeie, kneele and loute.

4754. Perdiccas P.

4764. an Assyrian] a Macedon<sup>y</sup>an B, H, R, J, R 3, H 5.

4766. as men may ther] who can weel B, R, J.

4768. exaltid was H. 4773. purposed] disposid R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 83 verso.

This was the biddynge of kyng Assuer,  
 Whan queen Vasti was uoided for hir pride,  
 And Hester chose, a maide most enter,  
 Was brouht to court with the kyng tabide,  
 Which hadde in youthe for to been hir guyde  
 A worthi Iew callid Mardoche,  
 Withynne Susis a large fair cite,

and this was  
 by the bidding  
 of King  
 4784 Ahasuerus, at  
 the time he  
 divorced Vasthi  
 and chose  
 Esther, who  
 in her youth  
 had always  
 followed  
 4788 the counsel of  
 Mordecai of  
 Shushan.

Bi whos counsail eueri thyng she wrouhte,  
 Passyng fair and of gret meeknesse.  
 And whan the eunukis to the kyng hir brouhte,  
 She was accepted for hir gret fairnesse  
 Vnto his grace, hir story berth witesse,  
 And ther cherished in especiall  
 Boue al the maidenens in the court roiall.

4792

And of al Perse she was Icrownid queen,  
 A pes comaundid thoruh al tho regiouns  
 Duryng the feeste, that men myhte seen  
 The kynges nobley in cites and in touns.  
 And of this feeste the riche roial souns  
 Cam to the eris of symple Mardoche,  
 Which cam with othir the maner for to see.

4796 and was now  
 crowned  
 queen of  
 Persia.  
 Mordecai heard  
 of the wedding  
 festivities and  
 went with  
 4800 others to see  
 the sights,

Tofor the paleis as he dide abide  
 With othir Iewes in his companye,  
 Of happ as he caste his ere aside,  
 He of too porteris the counsail dide espie,  
 How thei hem caste, bi fals conspiracie,  
 To slen the kyng som day of that yeer,  
 Lik ther entent whan thei fond best leiseer.

and as he  
 stopped before  
 4804 the palace he  
 became aware  
 of two porters,  
 who were  
 conspiring to  
 slay the king.

4808

Whan Mardocheus prudentli gan feele  
 The secre malis of ther compassyng,  
 Of compassioun he wolde it nat concele,  
 But made Hester discure it to the kyng.  
 Wherof convict, thei wer lad to hangyng,  
 As me semeth, a competent guerdoun  
 For al that falsli imagyne swich tresoun.

[p. 203] Out of com-  
 passion he  
 caused Esther  
 to inform  
 4812 Ahasuerus;  
 and the two  
 porters were  
 convicted and  
 hanged.

4816

4783. uoided] weddid H.  
 4787. Iew] Youhe R.  
 4791. eunukis] *om.* H, *muddled in R.*  
 4795. Boue] above H.  
 4796. crownyd H.  
 4799. 2nd in] *om.* R.  
 4809. best] *om.* H.  
 4814. Wherof] Wherforz H.  
 4816. swich] such als H.



Thus Mordecai  
came into the  
favour of the  
king and  
stood free of  
the power of  
Haman,

Bi which[e] mene the said[e] Mardoche  
Was weel accepted to kyng Assuer,  
Likli also to stonde at liberte  
Out of the malis and the fell daungeer 4820  
Of cursid Aman, which list make hym no cheer,  
But compassede in ful fel manere  
Hym to destroie & Iewes all ifeere.

to whom he did  
no reverence as  
the statute  
commanded.  
In his malice  
Haman had a  
gibbet erected  
for him before  
the palace —  
as if God were  
blind and  
unable to see  
tyrants;

This Mardocheus, the Bible telle can, 4824  
Withdrouh hymself for to do reuerence  
Vnto this tirant, the froward prince Aman,  
Lik as the statut comaundid in sentence.  
Which thyng tauenge be hasty\* violence, 4828  
This Aman made of hatrede to be set  
Affor the paleis a myhti strong gibet.

But who that caste hym for to do vengauce,  
And innocentis for toppresse of myht, 4832  
Bi wilful malis tagreggen ther greuauce,  
As God wer blynde and hadde of hem no siht, —  
But at the laste he wil of verray riht  
Pun[y]she the proude for furious violence, 4836  
The poore supportyng for ther long pacience.

but as Mordecai  
had in the  
meantime  
re-established  
the law of the  
Jews, Haman  
was hanged  
high upon a  
gallows for his  
pains.

As Mardocheus bi innocent lyuyng,  
Be mene of Hester and hir gret meeknesse  
Accepted was to Assuer the kyng, 4840  
The lawe of Iewes set in mor seurnesse,  
Froward Aman for his cursidnesse,  
Vengable of pride, the Bible ye may see,  
Was hih enhangid upon a galwe tre. 4844

Mardocheus, of prudence & resoun,  
The furious daunger of Aman set aside,  
Preserued his peeple fro destruccioun,  
The tiraunt hangid for his froward pride. 4848  
Thus kan the Lord his iugementis deuide,  
Whan he seeth tyme, most myhti and puissaunt,  
Supporte the symple and punshe the tiraunt.

4824. the] this R.

4828. hasty] froward B, J, R.

4838. bi] for H.

4842. his] hir R.

[Off the ii. brethre, Artaxerses and Cirus/ and  
Artaxerses slouh his childre and concubynes/  
and how thei ended.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**FFTIR the fal of Aman, dout[e]lles  
4852 After the death  
of Haman,  
Artaxerxes, in  
his time the  
most renowned  
of conquerors  
Whan he beste wende ha regned in his flours,  
Tofor Iohn Bochas cam Artaxerses,  
Most renommede his tyme of conquerours,  
Which gan declare the\* sodeyn sharpe shours, 4856  
With al the parcellis of his mortal peyne  
Which that Fortune ageyn hym gan ordeyne.

This Artaxerses, as put is in memorie,  
Al othir pryncis excelled in richesse,  
4860 and the richest  
of princes,  
appeared before  
Bochas. It was  
a strange thing  
that he should  
fall!  
Which in his chaier, famous of worldli glorie,  
And with his throne of worldli hih noblesse  
Sat in his tyme, the story berth witnesse,  
Hiest exaltid that was off eny kyng, — 4864  
That he sholde fall, was it an vnkouth thyng!

Kynges he hadde vndir his obeissaunce,  
An hundred prouynces, twenti & eek seuene,  
Sone onto Darie, prynce of most puissaunce, 4868  
His fame drad[de] mor than fryr leuene.  
Non so myhti vndir the sterred heuene  
Accountid was that tyme, in werre & pes,  
As was thys kyng callid Artaxerses. 4872

He hadde a brother that namyd was Cirus;  
Out of o stok cam ther bothe lynes.  
But Artaxerses, the story tellith thus,  
Was lord of greynes, of oilles & of vynes, 4876  
And hadde also bi dyuers concubynes  
An hundred children, lik as it is told,  
And fiftene ouer, tofor or he wex old.

Of bothe brethre the poweer laste ferre, 4880  
Duryng ther tyme stood in ful hih estat,  
Yet atween hem ther was ful mortal werre,  
Ageyn nature an vnkyndli debat;  
For thilke werris be most infortunat, 4884  
Whan blood with blood, lat no man deemen othir,  
List [to] werreie, as brother ageyn brother.

4856. the] his B, R, J, P. 4857. the] om. H.

4864. was] evir was H.

4869. fryr] fire R. 4878. childre H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 83 verso.

and its cause  
was a quarrel  
as to which of  
them should  
succeed King  
Darius.

And fynal cause whi this werre gan  
Atween these brethre, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>, 4888  
Thoruh which debat ther deied many a man, —  
The ground of al and first occasioun  
Was onli this: for successioun, —  
Aftir kyng Darie, regnyng in Perse & Mede, 4892  
Which of them tweyne sholde next succeede.

Artaxerxes put  
his brother  
secretly in  
prison and  
fettered him  
with gold,

But Artaxerses bamaner prouydence [p.204]  
Put pryueli his brother in prisoun,  
That he ne sholde make no diffence 4896  
Nor gadre peeple to his destruccioun.  
This yonge Cirus, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
Was faste stokkid, and eek as it is told,  
That his stokkis and fetris wer of gold. 4900

but he escaped  
and, collecting  
an army, met  
Artaxerxes in  
battle, and,  
after wounding  
him, forced him  
to retire from  
the field.

And thouh it be nat remembred in Bochas,  
How that Cirus escaped fro prisoun,  
Yit also soone as he delyuered was, 4904  
Throuh Perse and Mede ridyng up and doun,  
Gadred peeple off entencioun  
Thoruh old hatreede his brother to assaile.  
The feeld assignede, thei metten in bataile,  
Wher Cirus proudli put hymself in pres, 4908  
To shewe his manhod in especial,  
Souhte his brother, callid Artaxerses,  
And gaf to hym a wounde ful mortall,  
Withoute frenshepe or fauour fraternall, 4912  
That Artaxerses, his wounde gan so ake,  
Constreyned was the feeld[e] to forsake.

Cyrus then  
began to  
slaughter his  
foes; but  
Fortuna, ever  
deceitful, caused  
him to be  
wounded and  
taken prisoner,

And Cirus thanne, furious as leoun,  
His aduersaries gan mortalli to wake;\* 4916  
But fals Fortune, ful of collusioun,  
Vnder feynt smylyng a mowe gan hym make,  
Which caused, alas, that day that he was take,  
Afforn Iwoundid, it wolde be non othir, 4920  
And than presentid to his vnkynde brothir.

and shortly  
afterwards he  
died.

And thouh this Cirus hadde affor be founde  
Yong, fressh and lusti, & manli of his hond,  
Bi the constreynt of his mortal wounde 4924  
He died anon; for he no socour fonde.

4887. fynal] fynalli J — whi] whi bat H — this] these R.

4896. ne] na R. 4915. Cirus] Cirus was J — a leoun J, R 3.

4916. tawake B, H 5. 4919. 2nd that] om. H.

Thanne the two kyngdamys withynne Perse-lond  
Fill to the hondis of Artaxerses,  
In which aftir he lyued longe in pes.

4928

Thus a gret space, lik a myhti kyng  
Al Perse he heeld vnder his obeissaunce,  
Be famous noblesse gloriousli shynyng,  
Hauyng of richessis most fulsum habundaunce.  
And as it is Iput in remembrance,  
To mor ences of his prosperite,  
In trewe wedlok he hadde sonys thre.

Artaxerxes then  
became sole  
ruler of Persia.

4932

The firste of hem callid Darius;  
Arabratus namyd the secounde;  
And the thridde namyd was Othus,  
Manli\* pryncis, lik as it is founde.  
And of nature as the kyng was bounde,  
Vnto Darie, as it is maad menciouen,  
Aboue echon he hadde affecciouen.

4936 His three sons  
were Darius,  
Arabratus and  
Ochus, but he  
loved Darius  
above the  
others, and  
deeming him-  
self too feeble  
4940 to rule alone,  
set up  
Darius as king  
beside him,

And for he dempte hym able to the werre,  
Be likliheed, of yeeris yonge and greene,  
He caste fulli his noblesse to preferre;  
Of hih prudence thus he dide meene,  
His inpotence to supporte and susteene,  
For he was feeble in Perse to regne allone,  
He sette up Darie with hym in his throne.

4944

4948

Which was a thyng straunge and contrarious,  
Ageyn the custum of Persiens and vsance;  
But he supposed his sone Darius  
Sholde in such caas encrese & avaunce  
His fadres parti, of natural attendaunce,  
And shewe onto hym trouthe & kyndenesse,  
His impotence to cherisshe of gentillesse.

which was  
contrary to the  
custom of the  
Persians.

4952

4956

But in estat is ofte it doth thus fall,  
Whan that princis be ronne ferr in age,  
Ther childres loue ageyn hem doth appall,  
Shewyng no frenshipe sauf for auauntage,  
How that thei may reioise ther heritage,  
And in swich cas whan thei wexe stronge,  
Thynken ther fadris lyuen al to longe.

But as it  
often happens,  
when princes  
grow old, their  
children's love  
for them dies,  
4960 and they begin  
to think only  
of their inheri-  
tance.

4960

4932. fulsum] holsom H. 4936. hem] all H.  
4939. Manli] Namli B. 4943. to] for R, vn to H.  
4944. liklihoode H. 4947. impotence H.



This was  
what happened  
to Artaxerxes.  
Darius grew  
false and unkind

And Artaxerses stood in the same caas,  
As in his stori pleyntly ye shal fynde  
Be rehersaile and wrytyng of Bochas,  
How this Darie was fals & eek vnkynde,  
Foryetifful, & hadde nothyng in mynde,  
How his fader, the trouthe to reherse,  
Hath maad hym egal with hym to regne in Perse. 4964

and rebelled  
against his  
father.

And to declare the firste occasioun,  
To his fader how the said[e] Darie,  
Bi a fals maner of rebelloun,  
Gan in his werkyng for to be contrarie,  
Which to discure I wil no lenger tarie,  
But with my penne in al haste proceede  
Heer to descryue how it fill in deede. 4972

There was a  
fair concubine  
named Artusia,  
who belonged to  
Artaxerxes;

Artaxerses, among his concubynes, [p. 205]  
It is remembrid how that he hadde oon  
Which, for to rekne wyues and virgynes,  
Was fairest holde of them euerichon,  
Callid Artasia, of ful yore agon,  
And was that tyme, hir beaute to descryue,  
Among Persiens the fairest holde a-lyue. 4980

and although  
she was well on  
in years, having  
once been in  
Cyrus' harem,  
her beauty had  
not faded.

And though she were Ironne ferr in age,  
Lik as bookis list of hire expresse,  
Bothe of colour and also of visage  
She kept hir beaute & hir natiff fresshnesse. 4988  
Which was afor[n]e for hir semlynesse,  
To said[e] Cirus, breeffli to termyne,  
Chose long afforn to been his concubyne.

When Cyrus  
died she fell  
to Artaxerxes,

But whan this Cirus was passid into fate, 4992  
Which for his brother myht nat lyue in pes,  
Anon upon, withoute lenger date,  
She was take up for kyng Artaxerses,  
Because she was of beute pereles. 4996  
Aftir long tyme, whan he fill in age,  
She cleymed was bi title of heritage

and after he  
became of age  
Darius claimed  
her as a part  
of his inheri-  
tance.

Of kyng Darie bi his fader lyue,  
Feynyng his cleym[e] bi successioun, 5000  
Al-though his fadir ageyn it dide stryue.

4966. rehersyng H. 4968. Foryetfull R, Foryetful P.  
4972. the] this R. 4982. Artusia P. 4985. ronre R.  
4986. bookis] bochas R. 4989. hir] hir saide H.  
4990. To] To be H — saide] the forsaid P.  
4999. fadres R.

And thus began, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
Of ther debat the frste occasioun;  
For Darie caste, al-be he bar it still,  
Hir to reioysshe ageyn his fadris will.

5004

And tacomplisshe falsli his entent  
Of hir to haue ful pocessioun,  
Taforce his parti he made this argument:  
"Cirus," quod he, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
Regnyng in Perse the myhti regioun,  
And this story doth pley<sup>n</sup>li determyne,  
"For hir beute made hir his concvbyne."

5008

It was in  
this manner  
that his quarrel  
with his father  
began. His  
argument was,  
that she had  
been Cyrus'  
concubine, that  
when Cyrus  
died Artaxerxes  
took her, and  
that now she  
belonged of  
right to him,  
Darius, by in-  
heritance.

5012

And aftir tyme, whan Cirus was ded,  
Artaxerses, his fader, ye may see,  
Next hym succeedyng in Perse, it is no dreed,  
List hir to cley<sup>m</sup>e eek for hir gret beaute.  
"And so," quod Darie, "she longeth now to me,  
Because she is so plesaunt to my siht,  
Bi successioun I wil hir cley<sup>m</sup>e of riht."

5016

Thus kyng Darie to his fader saide  
He wolde haue Artasia the faire.  
And therwithal Artaxerses gan abraide,  
And ansuerde with face debonaire,  
"My sone," quod he, "I wil nat be contraire  
To thi desir, but of affeccioun  
Delyueren hir to thi pocessioun."

5020

Artaxerxes  
agreed to give  
her to Darius  
out of affection;

Of his promys he aftir gan repente,  
Cast hym to make another cheuisaunce;  
And secreli his concubyn he sente,  
Callid Artasia, as maad is remembraunce,  
And thoruh his slehti vnkou<sup>p</sup> purueiaunce,  
Vnto the temple, swich menys he hath souht,  
Of gret Appollo that she in haste was brouht.

5024

but he soon  
repented of his  
promise and

5028

Wher she was veilled & maad a preesteresse  
Aftir the rihtis, pley<sup>n</sup>li, and the guise  
Of old paynemes bamaner hoolynesse,  
And ther professid for to doon seruise,  
As ther statutis constreynen and deuise.

5032

contrived to  
send her to the  
temple of  
Apollo, where  
she was made  
a priestess and  
vowed to  
chastity.

5036

5007. Of hir is repeated R.

5008. this] his H.

5011. playnly doth termyne H.

5015. hym] om. H.

5016. gret] om. H.

5017. now to] vn to H.

5021. Arthusia P.

Duryng hir liff, it myhte non other be,  
She bounde was to lyue in chastite.

5040

At this Darius  
went almost  
mad for rage,

This thyng was wrouhte bi the compassyng  
Of Artaxerses, be froward ialousie.

Wherof Darie, the yonge lusti kyng,  
Wex almost wood whan he it dide espie,  
And gan compassen of malencolie,  
Furious rancour & hasty cruelte  
Vpon his fader auengid for to be.

5044

and, seeking  
revenge, allied  
himself with  
his 115 natural  
brothers, who  
agreed that their  
father should  
die.

And his parti of force to susteene,  
With hym he hadde, the story maketh mynde,  
His brethre in bast, an hundred & fifeene,  
Which to ther fader wer fals & vnkynde.  
Of al this noumbre ther lefft non behynde  
That fro this purpos onys list dissente,  
His deth of o will all did\* assente.

5048

5052

But Artaxerxes  
was informed of  
their intentions  
and collected  
an army

Yit of this straunge fals conspiracie  
Artaxerses hadde a knowlechyng,  
Al-though the stori doth nat specefie  
How, ne be whom, he hadde therof wetyng.  
For which in haste, he made no tarieng  
To gadre meyne & make hymself strong,  
Hymself tauenge of this disnaturel wrong.

5056

5060

and resolved to  
take vengeance  
on them.

For Artaxerses, lik as the caas tho stood, [p. 206]  
Thouhte it sat weel to his hih noblesse,  
To be venged vpon vnkynde blood;  
For lawe, nature decres rihtwisnesse,  
And alle statutis dampne vnkyndenesse,  
Wherbi this kyng occasioun dide fynde  
Ageyn his childre, because thei wer vnkynde.

5064

5068

Some men say  
that a multitude  
of children  
make a father  
strong, but this  
is true only if  
they are  
virtuous.

Somme men deeme how gret[e] multitude  
Of many childre maketh a fader strong;  
But therupon, pleynli to concluden,  
Vertu is cause, yif she duelle hem among.  
But yif ther corage enclyneth onto wrong,  
And vicious lyff do ther bridil leede,  
The gretter noumbre, the wers thei must[e] speede.

5072

The offspring of  
a wicked line  
may corrupt an  
entire region;

A progenie born of a cursid lyne  
May thoruh his froward fals infeccioun,

5076

5042. ialousie] leulose R. 5044. it] om. H.  
5054. all did] thei B, R, J, R 3, H 5, P. 5058. ne] nor H.  
5067. kyng] thyng R. 5077. fals froward R.

Outward be colour of trouthe thouh he shyne,  
 Vnder apparence and symulacioun  
 Infecte and corupte al a regeoun;  
 For, it is seid of ful old langage,  
 Frut of sour trees take a sour tarage.

for the fruit  
 of sour trees  
 has a sour  
 flavour.

5080

This was weel shewed in Artaxerses,  
 That suffred his brother deien at myscheeff,  
 Bledyng his wounde, left hym help[e]les,  
 Which to his name shal euer been repreeff.  
 Thus blood vnkynde vnkyndli makth his preeff;  
 For al the childre fro his stok descendid  
 Wer cursid echon, as heer is comprehendid.

This was well  
 proven by  
 Artaxerxes,  
 who let his  
 brother die  
 helpless, and  
 whose children  
 were cursed.

5084

5088

Ther stock was first contagious of nature,  
 The griffes froward, thouh thei wer gret in noubre,  
 Which of assent dide ther besi cure  
 Bi fals tresoun ther fader to encoumbre.  
 But ther is no shade nor no couert ouble  
 So closli kept, namli of fals[e] guile,  
 But the venym wil shewen oute sum while.

The stock was  
 noxious and the  
 grafts and  
 branches  
 froward,  
 although large  
 in number.

5092

5096

And thus the deth contagiousli conspired  
 Of Artaxerses sithe go ful yore,  
 Wheron tauenge, hys herte was so fired  
 Of furious ire & Ibrent so sore,  
 That he nat koude differre it ferthermore,  
 But with his meyne fill on hem anon  
 Or thei wer war, and slouh hem euerichon.

Artaxerxes fell  
 on them with  
 his soldiers  
 unawares and  
 slew every one.

5100

He slouh also al his concubynes,  
 That wer ther mōdres, of whom I told toforn,  
 Suffred non to lyue of [al] ther lynes;  
 So of that lynage he hath the weed upshorn,  
 Fond among alle no greyn of good[e] corn:  
 Convict bi doom, whan thei wer presentid,  
 How to his deth echon thei wer assentid.

He also killed  
 his concubines,  
 their mothers,

5104

5108

His clothes spreynt with the vnkynde blood  
 Of his childre, which he dide sheede,  
 Aftir whos deth in gret myscheeff he stood;  
 And so in sorwe his lyff he dide leede, —  
 Deied aftir in myscheef & in dreede.  
 Deth quit with deth, & rage with rage:  
 Loo, heer the fyn of his vnweeldi age!

and after living  
 the rest of his  
 life in sorrow,  
 he himself died

5112

5116

5078. he] they R, she H.

5095. namli] onely H.

5099. was] om. R.

5101. nat] ne H.

5106. al] om. R, J, R 3, P.

5116. 1st deth] Seth R.

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## ¶ [Lenvoye.]

This tragedie  
describes the  
enmity between  
two brothers,  
which led to  
war and the  
destruction of  
their kindred.

**T**HIS tragedie afforn declareth heere  
The grete outrage of vnkyndenesse,  
Atween too brethre regnyng bothe ifeere 5120  
In Perse-lond, as ye han herd expresse,  
Til dyuisioun, of al myscheef maistresse,  
Gan entren in thoruh fraternal hatreede,  
Which ageyn kynde destroied ther kynreede. 5124  
The werre aroos, contagious for to lere,  
Thoruhout al Perse of mortal frowardnesse,  
Of Cirus deth rehersyng the maneere,  
How help[e]les he deied in distresse, 5128  
And how the noumbre of brethre dide hem dresse  
To slen ther fader — the story ye may reede, —  
Causing an eende of al ther hool kynreede.

Artaxerxes slew  
his children  
together with  
their mothers  
and soon  
afterwards died.

Kyng Artaxerses, with a froward cheere, 5132  
His iniuries & wronges to redresse,  
Slouh his childre, ther moodres eek ifeere,  
Spared nat oon, of cruel hastynesse.\*  
Bi which occasioun took a gret siknesse, 5136  
Aftir deied in myscheef & in dreede,  
Causing an eende of al his hool kynreede.

The abomination  
of fraternal  
strife spread all  
over Persia,  
infecting the  
air with foul,  
slanderous  
blackness.

Loo, heer a sorwe nat particuleer;  
For thoruh al Perse ran the cursidnesse, 5140  
The crokid fame sprad bothe ferr & neer  
Of this vengable, hasti, fel woodnesse,  
The hair infectyng *with* sclaudroux foul blaknesse,  
To shewe be vengauce the contrarious meede 5144  
Of blood vnkynde boorn of oon kynreede.

Noble Princes,  
avoid rancour,  
remember the  
mischief that  
follows blood  
unkind, born of  
one kindred.

Noble Princis, left up your eyen cleere [p. 207]  
And considreth, bi gret auisynesse,  
The woful stryues, the odious fel daungeere 5148  
Sowe in kynreedis of wilful straungenesse.  
Of al rancour your corages doth represe,  
Peisyng the myscheeuys folwyng on in deede  
Of blood vnkynde born of o kynreede. 5152

## ¶ Explicit liber tercius.

5126. Thoruhout] Thoruh R.

5132. *This stanza and the next are transposed* R.

5135. cruel hastynesse] froward cursednesse B, J, R, P.

5143. foul] *om.* R. 5148. fel] fals H, R 3, H 5.

## BOOK IV

¶ Incipit prohemium libri quarti.

**F**RU<sup>t</sup> of writyng set in cronicles olde,  
Most delectable of fresshnesse in tastyng,  
And most goodli & glorious to beholde,  
In cold and heete lengest abidyng,  
Chaung of cesouns may doon it non hyndryng;  
And wher-so be that men dyne or faste,  
The mor men taste, the lenger it wil laste.

The fruit of old  
writings remains  
fresh always;  
it is harmed by  
no change of  
season, and the  
4 more men taste  
of it, the longer  
it lasts.

It doth corages renewe ageyn & glade,  
Which may be callid frut of the tre of lyff,  
So parmanable that it wil neuer fade.  
To the fyue wittis grettest restoratiff,  
And to ther plesance most cheef confortatiff;  
For of nature whan thei be quik & goode,  
Thei of this frut tak ther natural foode.

8 It gives us new  
heart, as if it  
were the fruit  
of the tree of  
life,

Auctours heeron conclude and eek assente,  
How that writyng of his kyndeli riht  
Doth loid personis & liknessis represente  
Of freendis absent, seuered fer from siht;  
Dirknesse of absençe is clerid with the liht,—  
Thus frut of writyng hath his auauntages,  
Of folk ferr off to presente the images.

16 and clears  
away the dark-  
ness of absence  
and brings the  
images of loved  
ones, who may  
be far away,  
near to us.

Lawe hadde perissshed, nadde be writyng;  
Our feith appalled, ner vertu of scripture;  
For al religioun and ordre of good lyuyng  
Takh ther exauple be doctryn of lettrure.  
For wyng causeth, with helpe of portraiture,  
That thynges dirked, of old that wer begonne,  
To be remembred with this celestial sonne.

20  
24 Were it not  
for writing, law  
had perished  
and our faith  
grown dim and  
faint.

5. non] no H. 10. permanble R, permanable H, R 3.  
15. conclude heron H.  
20. Thus] This H — wrytynges R.  
22. nadde be] had be H.  
25. Takh] Tak R.  
26. portrateur R.

God ordained  
writing to offset  
the dulness of  
our nature, to  
illumine the  
world by  
eloquence, to  
asseal covenants  
and make  
agreements sure.

Diligence,  
triumphant over  
sloth, has by  
its labour  
brought things  
long passed into  
fresh remem-  
brance.

It is through  
writing that  
we know the  
lives of old  
patriarchs and  
prophets and  
the martyrs  
who upheld the  
banner of Christ.

The diligence of  
writers is like  
a beautiful tree  
that blossoms  
and bears fruit  
every year.

The Epigrams  
of Prosper,  
Seneca's  
Tragedies, the  
Stratagems of  
Vegetius and  
the Satires of  
Persius had all  
vanished, but  
for writing, that  
vouchsafes to  
poets their  
eternal name.  
Take record of  
Virgil, the  
Mantuan, who,  
sovereign of  
his style,  
wrote of Aeneas  
and Dido.

God sette writyng & lettres in sentence,  
Ageyn the dulnesse of our infirmyte,  
This world tenlumyne be crafft of elloquence;  
Canoun, cyuile, philosophie — these thre  
Confermed fraunchises of many strong cite,  
Couenauntis asselid, trouthis of old assured,  
Nadde writyng been, myht nat haue endurid.

Dilligence, cheef triumphatrice  
Of slogardie, necligence & slouth,  
Eek of memorye upholdere and norice  
And registreer to suppowaille trouthe,  
Hath of old labour (& ellis wer gret routhe)  
Brouhte thynges passid, notable in substaunce,  
Onli be writyng to newe remembrance.

Writyng is cause that herto is remembrid  
Lyf of prophetis & patriarches olde,  
How thapostlis and martirs wer dismembrid  
For Cristis feith, his baner up to holde.  
And writyng sheweth, toform as I you tolde,  
Of confessours the grete stedfastnesse,  
And of virgynes the virgynal clenness.

Lik to a tre which euery yeer berth frut, [p. 208]  
Shewyng his beute with blosmys & with flours,  
Riht so the foode of our inward reffut,  
Be dilligence of these olde doctours  
And daili frut of ther feithful labours  
Han our corages fostred & pasturid  
Be writyng onli, which hath so longe endurid.

The Epigrames whilom perished hadde  
Of prudent Prosper, that was so vertuous,  
And of Senec the tragedies sadde,  
The Stratagemys of Vigecius,  
Rebuk in vicis of noble Percivs, —  
Yif in olde writyng hadde be founde a lak,  
These said[e] thynges hadde fer be put abak.

Writyng caused poetis to recure  
A name eternal, the laurer whan thei wan,  
In adamaunt graue perpetuelli tendure.  
Record I take of Virgile Mantuan,

29. lettris & writyng H.

31. to elumyne R.

39. Registeer H. 51. shewith H.

That wrot the armys & prowesse of the man 68  
 Callid Eneas, whan he of hih corage  
 Cam to Itaiill from Dido of Cartage.

Thre famous bookis this auctour list compile,  
 Eneidoys first; which that dide excell 72  
 In rethorik be souereynte of stile.

He drank swich plente, this poete, as men tell,  
 Of the stremys that ran doun fro the well  
 Wrouhte bi tho sustres that be in noumbre nyne, 76  
 Prowesse of kniethod most cleerli to termyne.

For in that book he cast[e] nat to fail,  
 With vois mellodious for to descryue ariht  
 The grete conquest of Rome & of Itaiill  
 Wrouht bi Enee, the manli Troian kniht. 80  
 Whos vers notable yif so cleer a liht  
 Thoruh al the world[e], as in rethorik,  
 That among poetis was non onto hym lik. 84

and described  
 the conquest of  
 Rome and  
 Italy.  
 80 No poet was  
 his equal.

He wrot also, this poete with his hond  
 Bi humble stile othir bookis tweyne,  
 Oon of pasture, the nexte of tilthe of lond,  
 The vers conveied with feet of metris pleyne.  
 Bi which thre labours a palme he dide atteyne,  
 To make his name throuh dites delitable  
 Aboue poetis to be most comendable.

He also wrote  
 about pastoral  
 life and a Book  
 of Tylth in  
 metrical verse,  
 attaining a palm  
 88 above all other  
 poets.

Wrytyng of poetis hath set withynne his cloos 92  
 Conquest of kniethod, ther tryumphes & renouns.  
 Reed of Ouide Mëthamorphoseos,  
 The grete wondres, the transmutaciouns,  
 The moral menyng, [th]vnkouth conclusiouns,  
 His book de Ponto, & with gret dilligence 96  
 Ful many a pistil compleynyng for absence.

Read Ovid's  
 Metamorphoses,  
 his *Epistulae ex  
 Ponto*, his  
*Tristia*, his *Ars  
 amatoria*,  
 because of  
 which Augustus  
 96 exiled him, his  
*Remedia  
 amoris*.

Of craft of loue a book he hath compiled,  
 Wheroff Cesar hadde ful gret disdeyn, 100  
 Which was cause that he was exilled  
 Tabide in Ponto, and neuer come ageyn.  
 And yit he dide his labour in certeyn,  
 In hope of grace, his wittis to applie 104  
 To write a book of lous remedie.

69. whan he] which H. 72. Eneidos R, Enoydos H.  
 79. vois] wise R. 87. Oon] And R. 90. delectable R.  
 96. thvnkouth] vnkouth R, J, P, R 3. J omits lines 99-288.  
 102. come] to cum H.



- And remember Petrarch,  
laureate in Rome, and his  
Book of Two Fortunes, his  
Eclogues and Cosmography,  
his Psalms of Repentance,  
his Epic of Africa, *De Vita solitaria* and  
his Book of Ignorance, who  
got himself a perpetual name  
by his writing. Read his Letters  
Without a Title and his Book  
of Famous Women.
- Wrytyng of old, with lettres aureat,  
Labour of poetis doth hihli magnefie,  
Record on Petrak, in Rome laureat, 108  
Which of too Fortunys wrot the remedie,  
Certeyn Ecloogis and his Cosmographie,  
And a gret conflict, which men may reede & see,  
Of his querellis withynne hymself secre. 112
- He wrot seuene Psalmys of gret repentaunce,  
And in his Affrik comendid Scipioun,  
And wrot a book of his ignoraunce  
Bi a maner of excusacioun, 116  
And sette a notable compilacioun  
Vpon the lyff[e] callid solitarie,  
To which this world is froward and contrarie.
- And thus be wrytyng he gat hymself a name 120  
Perpetuelli to been in remembraunce,  
Set and registred in the Hous of Fame,  
And made Epistles of ful hih substaunce  
Callid Sine Titulo; & mor hymself tauaunce, 124  
Of famous women he wrot the excellence,  
Gresilde preferring for hir gret pacience.
- It is also remembered in  
writing how Troy was  
destroyed, the slaughter of  
Hector and Homer's ex-  
clusive praise of Achilles, who  
wrought all by fraud.
- Wrytyng also remembrid hath how Troye  
Destroied was, sith[en] go many a yeer, 128  
The slauhtre of Ector, cheef piler of ther ioie.  
And for the parti of Grekis wrot Omer,  
Which in his wrytyng was particuleer;  
For Tachille, that wrouhte al be fraude, 132  
Aboue Ector he gaf a synguler lauðe.
- Writing makes green the  
chaplets of Æsop and  
Juvenal, and on Dante it bestows  
celestial fame.
- Wrytyng causeth the chaplet to be greene [p. 209]  
Bothe of Esope and of Iuuenal;  
Dantis labour it doth also meyntheene 136  
Bi a report verray celestial,  
Sunge among Lumbardis in especial,  
Whos thre bookis the grete wondres tell  
Of heuene aboue, of purgatorie & hell. 140
- Through writing men learn of  
the miracles and holiness of the  
blessed saints, of medicines and  
salves and staunches for  
mortal wounds.
- Men be wrytyng knowe the meracles  
Of blissid seyntes & of ther hoolynesse,  
Medecyne[s], salue & eek obstacles  
Geyn mortal woundis and eueri gret seeknesse, 144  
Recreacioun and solace in distresse,

113. Psalmys] palmys R. 114. his] om. R.  
132. Tachille] to Achilles H, tachilles R 3, P.  
140. hell] of hell H. 144. Geyn] ageyn H.

Quiete in labour, in pouert pacience,  
And in richesse riht, trouthe and conscience.

¶ Shortnesse of lyff and foryetilnesse,  
The wit of man dul & ay slidyng,  
Necligence and froward idilnesse, —  
Echon stepmooder to science and konnyng,  
That I dar sey[e]n, nadde be writyng  
Onli ordeyned for our auantages,  
Ded wer memorie & mynde of passid ages.

And thus in cheef thes causes affor told  
Meued the herte of Bochas to writyng,  
And to remembre be many story old  
Thestat of pryncis, in chaieres hih sittyng,  
And for vices ther vnwar fallyng,  
Yiuuyng exaample, as I afferme dar,  
Of fals Fortune how thei shal be war.

His firste thre bookis be ful cleer merours,  
Fulli acomplished, as Bochas vndirttook,  
The cause of fallyng of many conquerours,  
Onli for trouthe and vertu thei forsook.  
For which myn auctour toward his fourte book  
Gan sharpe his penne, to his eternal fame,  
Onli be writyng to geten hym a name.

Myn auctour Bochas, that so moche koude,  
Begynneth heer to make a processe  
Ageyn thourage of pryncis that wer proude,  
Which wer brouht lowe for ther frowardnesse,  
And notabli remembreth how\* meeknesse,  
Which stondest hool in oon & doth contune,  
Is ay fraunchised fro daunger of Fortune.

But he in maner doth recapitle ageyn  
The fal of many that sat on hih[e] stages,  
How thei for vicis stood ay in noun certeyn,  
Cam to myscheef for ther gret outrages.

148 Shortnesse of  
life and lack  
of memory,  
negligence and  
idleness, would  
have destroyed  
the mind of past  
ages, had it not  
152 been for writing.

For these  
reasons Bochas  
156 was moved to  
tell the tale of  
princes, who  
sat on high  
thrones and  
fell because  
of their vices.

160

His first three  
books com-  
pleted, he  
164 sharpened his  
pen

168

and began  
a process  
against the  
outrages of  
proud princes,  
who were  
172 brought low  
for their  
perversity.

176 He recapitu-  
lated the fall of  
Priam, who  
sustained  
adultery,

148. H has large initial.

151. Echon] om. H.

153. avantage H. 154. Age H.

155. cheef] myscheef (but mys crossed out) B — thes] ther R  
— to fore R.

158. chaires R, chaires H.

162. be] bi R. 169. moche gode koude R.

170. Begynnyng R. 173. how] the B.

176. recapitle] a Chapitle H.

Remembryng first of Priam the damages, 180  
 And how he loste sceptre and regalie  
 For sustenyng of fals auoutrye.

and of Astyages,  
 who married his  
 daughter to  
 Cambyzes, a  
 man of low  
 birth,

The fal rehersyng of Astriages,  
 That gaf his douhtir whilom in mariage 184  
 To oon that was Icallid Cambises,  
 A poore man bor[e]n of lough lynage,  
 For he shold[e] ha[ue] non auauntage  
 In no maner, nouthur in riht nor wrong, 188  
 Bi rebellioun ageyn hym to be strong.

so that  
 there should be  
 no male born  
 of his line who  
 could put him  
 from his throne.  
 Yet, after all,  
 Fortune over-  
 threw him.

For he tofforn hadde had aveseoun,  
 How ther shold oon procedyn of his lyne,  
 Which sholde hym putte out of his regeoun 192  
 And cause hym in myscheef for to fyne.  
 But yit Fortune koude hym vndermyne,  
 That al his wisdam stood in non auail;  
 For ageyn God preuaileth no counsail. 196

I need not tell  
 his story here,  
 or the story  
 of Cyrus or  
 King Tarquin.

It needeth nat his story to reherse,  
 Nor the maner of his vnhappi chaunce,  
 Nor the fallyng of Cirus kyng of Perse, 200  
 Nor of kyng Tarquyn for his mys gouernaunce,  
 Thouh Bochas heer put hem in remembraunce.  
 For as me semeth, it wer a thyng in veyn,  
 Thyng onys told to telle it newe ageyn.

Nor did Bochas  
 again rehearse  
 the tale of  
 Artaxerxes.  
 It has already  
 been told, and  
 Bochas begins  
 here with  
 Marcus Manlius.

And he list nat now to be rek[e]les, 204  
 Newe ageyn to make rehersaile  
 Of the kyng callid Artaxerses;  
 Sithe it is told, what sholde it mor auaille?  
 But he procedith streiht onto Itaille 208  
 To telle ther stories, and begynneth heer  
 At Marchus Manlius, a Romeyn consuleer.

### ¶ Finis Prologi.

181. loste] left H.

183. fal] fals H.

185. callid R.

190. a vision R, P, a visioun H, avision R 3, avycioun H 5 —  
 had] om. R.

202. as] om. H.

208. onto] in to H.

210. At] Of H — Marcus Manlius H, Mallius R.

## ¶ Incipit liber quartus.

[Howe marchus manlius wrought and dyd for Rome  
toun/ And at the laste he was by the comons  
caste into\* Tibre and there drowned.]<sup>1</sup>

**W**HILOM in Rome ther was a gret lynage [p.211] The Manlius  
gens was  
Callid Manliois, of renommed noblesse, 212 celebrated in  
And of that stok, riht fair in his yong age, Rome, and  
Cam this Marchus, his stori berth wisesse. Marcus, thrice  
Which bi processe for his worthynesse consul, was one  
Was thre tymes be iust eleccioun of its  
Maad consuleer of that worthi toun. 216 descendanta.

Which to the comoun ful gretli dide auaile,  
He dyuers times for the toun[e]s riht  
Fauht in his daies many strong bataile,  
And ay preuailede thoruh his grete myht, 220  
And in the feeld[e] bi a synguler fihht  
Outraied his enemy, lik as it is told,  
And took from hym a riche bie of gold. 224

Torques in Latin, in Inglissh is a bie,  
A cercle of gold, which that Marchus wan.  
Brouht[e] it hom thoruh his cheualrie;  
And of torques, he was callid than 228  
Marchus Torquatus; & thus the name gan,  
He to be callid, the stori tellith vs,  
Among Romeyns Torquatus Manlius.

And he wolde ofte iuparte good & liff,  
For the cite entre the feeld allone,  
And ther conquered for a prerogatiiff  
Sondri crownes, with many riche stone, 232  
Wan\* tunicles of gold ful many one;  
For thilke tyme, for dyuers hih emprises  
Wer crownis maad in many sondri wises. 236

He often fought  
for the town,  
and after he  
had won a rich  
arm-ring of gold  
from an enemy  
in single  
combat, he

was called  
Marcus  
Torquatus; for  
Torques in Latin  
means a ring.

He also won  
many crowns of  
gold; and in  
those days  
crowns were the  
reward of great  
emprises

212. Malliois R, Manlyoys H, Manlioys R 3, P.

214. Marcus H, P — his] pe H. 218. ful] om. H.

222. fihht] siht R.

229. began R.

230. vs] thus H.

231. Mallius R.

235. many a H.

236. Wan] Whan B, R — ful] om. H, R 3, P.

<sup>1</sup> Supplied from Pt, n. 6 recto (below cut and Incipit). For  
into read nito.



and, as Aulus Gellius says, were given to men who, after they had fought and risked their lives for the town, were called champions.

For as Agellius maketh mencion,  
Ther wer in Rome deuised straunge crouns 240  
For such as hadden fouhten for the town,  
And\* for ther labour resceyued ther guerdouns,  
Bi a prerogatiff callid champiouns,  
Which sondry tymes of manhood & of myht 244  
Iuparted ther lyff\* for the toun[e]s riht.

There were Triumphal, Obsidional, Mural, and Naval crowns, and a crown called Castrence.

Lik ther desertis thes crown[e]s took ther names;  
For summe of them wer callid Tryumphal,  
Youe onto knihtes for ther noble fames. 248  
Othir also callid Obsidional

In Romeyn tunge; & summe ther wer Mural, —  
Eek other tweyne, Naua and Castrence,  
And alle thei wern of ful gret excellence. 252

Triumphal crowns were given to emperors and mighty conquerors.

The Tryumphal maked wer of gold,  
Offred in tryumphes to worthi emperours,  
Set with saphirs and rubies manyfold  
Vpon the hedis of myhti conquerours. 256  
And whan that Rome was shynnyng in his flours,  
That crowne callid, *with* braunchis boornid faire,  
In ther vulgar Thaureat Coronaire.

Obsidional crowns were wrought like grain or corn and presented to those who relieved besieged cities.

Thobsydyonal, of which I spak tofforn, 260  
Deuised wern, the book doth specesfe,  
Crown[e]s notable wrouht lik greyn or corn,  
Youe onto princis which thoruh ther cheualrie  
Reskewed seeges and saued the partie 264  
Of hem that wer[e] closed streiht withynne,  
Thoruh hih prowesse a crowne for to wynne.

The Mural crown of laurel was granted to him who first ascended the wall of an assaulted stronghold,

Another crowne, that callid was Mural,  
Was youe and grauntid bi the emperour 268  
To hym that firste wan vpon the wal  
At any seege, and ther abood the shour  
Fihtyng allone, in hope of sum socour.  
And he that myht[e] such a brunt susteene, 272  
Sholde of laurer were a crowne greene.

and Naval crowns, carved like rudders, were ordained for those who first entered the ship of an enemy.

Naua crownes whilom wer ordeyned  
For them that fauht[e] manli on the se,  
Whan ther shippis wer togidre-cheyned, — 276  
He that of manhod & marcial surete  
Vpon his enmyes made first entre

239. Aulus Gellius P. 242. And] As B — labours R.  
243. callid] maade R. 245. lyff] lyues B. 246. thes] be H.  
252. excellence] reverence H, R 3. 253. The] This R.

Resceyue sholde, in al the peeplis siht,  
Korue lich a rother, a crowne cleer & briht.

280

The nexte crowne, which callid is\* Castrence,  
Was youe of custum to that manli kniht  
That list auauunce hym thoruh his magnificence,  
Hostes assemblede, iuparte wolde of myht  
Tofforn al other [t]entren into fihht,  
Sholde eek resseyue, his noblesse for to queeme,  
A sterriid crowne maad lik a diadeeme.

The starred  
crown called  
Castrence was  
received by  
that knight who  
entered into  
battle before all  
other men,

284

The crowne also which callid was Oual  
Took first name of ioie and gladnesse,  
Which kynges, princis in actis marcial  
Vsid somtyme in ther ioious noblesse  
At sodeyn skarmysshes of casuel hastynesse,  
As whan thei venquysshed proudli in bataille  
Such as ther hihnesse vnwarli wolde assaille.

and the Oval  
crown by the  
victor in a  
sudden  
skirmish.

288

292

And for thei wern of poweer invyncible,  
Ther noble crownis coriousli wer wrouht  
Of mirtis branchis, which been inputrible,  
Enduryng euere and corupte nouht.  
For this woord Oual, yif it be weel souht,  
Is seid of gladnesse, as put is in memorie,  
Ordeyned for pryncis after ther victorie.

[p. 212] It was wrought  
of myrtle  
branches, which  
never corrupt.

296

300

Anothir crowne callid Cyuyca,  
Of oken bowes was maad[e] round & pleyn,  
Ordeyned for them which *pro Re Publica*  
Koude in bataille reskewe a citeseyn  
And slen his enmy that was a foreyn.  
Of myhti ok he sholde for manheed  
Cleyme to were a crowne upon his hed.

The Civic  
crown, made  
of oak boughs,  
was the reward  
for rescuing a  
citizen in battle  
and slaying his  
enemy.

304

308

And lik as knihtis in marcial delites,  
For comoun profit dede hemsilf auauunce,  
So for ther noble victorious merites  
The Romeyn peepple hadde a gret plesance,  
With sundri crownis marcial in substaunce,

As Aulus  
Gellius records,  
the Romans  
took great  
pleasure in thus  
rewarding their  
famous knights.

312

281. is callid B, R.

285. tentren] entren R.

291. ther] the R.

296. wer] was R.

297. mirtis] Marcus H, Martys H 5, mirthis R 3 — imputrible

J, R, H, P.

308. a] bat H.

312. Romeyn peepple] Romayns H.

For to guerdone ther knihtis most famous,  
Myn auctour record callid Agellius.

Marcus Manlius  
often risked his  
life, and won  
many crowns,

Among other that dede ther besi peyne  
Such[e] crownis manli to recure,  
Marcus Manlius, in manhod souereyne,  
Put ofte his lyff in mortal auenture;  
For in his force so moche he dide assure,  
That he deserued ful yore agon  
Of these said crownes many mo than oon.

316

and was given  
the surname  
Capitolinus

And to [the] ences of his noble fame  
He dede a thyng bothe manli & dyuyn,  
Wherbi that he gat hym a surname  
To be callid Marchus Capitolyne,  
Which aboue alle his namis dide shyne, —  
Whan he allone, wherbi he is comendid,  
The Capitoile from enmyes hath defendid.

324

328

at the time  
that the  
French captured  
the city and  
tried to take  
the Capitol

Whan thei of Fraunce hadde taken the cite,  
Put al Rome at myscheef onto fliht,  
And leid await[e] with a gret meyne  
The Capitoile for to take at niht,  
Bi a passage that lay ferr out of siht  
Vnder a roche callid Carmentoun,  
Ther taue entred into the cheef dongoun.

332

336

by climbing  
along a dark  
valley at mid-  
night and  
scaling the wall  
in a surprise  
attack.

Thei wer ther shrowdid vndir a dirk[e] vale,  
With ordynaunce and myhti violence  
Toward mydnyht the wal[le] for to scale,  
Most couertli them keepyng in scilence;  
Dempte pley[n]li, for lak\* of resistance,  
That thei sholde, maugre tho withyne,  
Ther hour assigned, the Capitoile wyne.

340

But the brave  
geese beat their  
wings and made  
such a com-  
motion that  
Marcus awoke,

But the ges that wer wit[h]ynne cloos,  
The waker foules be noise of ther komyng  
Gan bete ther weenges, & up anon aros,  
Wherthoruh this Marcus in his bed liggyn  
Gan tabraide, & made no tarieng,  
Took his harnais, most furious & wroth,  
And to the wallis in al haste he goth.

344

348

315. A. Gellius P.

318. Mallius R.

325. that] *om.* H — gat] gaff R.

333. to] *om.* R.

337. Thei] Ther R. 341. lak] lakkyng B, J.

343. the] ther H. 346. aros] thei aros R.

And hym that cam first upon the wall,  
 Of verray force, withoute mor tarieng,  
 Doun into Tibre he made hem haue a fall;  
 And all his felawes bisi in scalyng,  
 With sheeld or pauys, or ladders up reisyng,  
 This manli Mark, shortli to comprehende,  
 Into the flood he made hem to descende.

and, rushing to  
 the wall, threw  
 352 the enemy one  
 after another  
 into the Tiber.

Vnto the deth, of hym thei wer abauyd;  
 For bi his kniethod & his hih renoun,  
 Maugre them, the Capitoile sauid  
 And aftirward rescued al the toun.  
 [And] for the fortune, in conclusioun,  
 Which that tyme dide vnto hym fall,  
 Capitolinus men dede hym aftir call.

They were cast  
 down by him to  
 their death, and  
 360 thus the Capitol  
 was saved.

And for he was so victorious,  
 Hymself allone be this hih victorie,  
 This name he gat to hym & al his hous,  
 Perpetueli to been in memorye  
 And registred in the consistorie,  
 In ther cronicles his name determyned,  
 With goldene lettres to been enlumyned.

For this deed  
 the name  
 Capitolinus  
 was given to  
 him and his  
 368 family in  
 perpetuity.

And the gees, of whom I spak also,  
 That so weel kepte wach upon the niht,  
 Itake wern and offired to Iuno  
 Solempneli with gret[e] torchis liht,  
 To whom also it grauntid was of riht,  
 Whan a famyne maad her stoor to faile,  
 Thei spared wern & take for no vitaile.

And the geese  
 were made  
 372 sacred to Juno  
 and never eaten  
 in time of  
 famine.

And thus was Marcus lik a\* conquerour  
 Worsheped in Rome, alle beyng of assent.  
 But whan summe folk be set in gret honour,  
 Sumtyme it happeth thei holde hem nat content,  
 With couetise ther hertis be so blent,  
 Fro suffisaunce, aboue ther degrees  
 To surmounte to hier dignites.

[p. 213] Marcus received  
 all the worship  
 380 of a conqueror;  
 but, like many  
 other men set  
 in high honour,  
 he was not  
 content,

This Manlius was fret in his corage  
 To gretter worshepis sodenli tascende,  
 Deemyng so to haue had auantage,

but wanted to  
 transcend his  
 equals,

388

353. hem] hym H. 362. And] om. R. 374. to] onto R.

379. Marcus lik a] Mark a mihti B, R, J, Marc lik a H, R 3, P,  
 H 5.

383. so be H.



And in hymself gan frowardli pretende  
In that cite al othir to transcende,  
Beside tryumphes, which wer to hym reserued,  
Hiere to clymbe than he hath disserued.

392

and became  
jealous of a  
lord named  
Camillus, the  
greatest man in  
Rome, governor  
of the city,

But ther was oon, as maad is mencion,  
Callid Camyllus, a lord of gret substaunce,  
Which in the cite & in that myhti toun  
Aboue al othir hadde gouernaunce.

396

And as it is Iput in remembraunce,  
To his gretnesse non othir myht atteyne,  
At whos noblesse Marchus gan disdeyne.

and rebelled  
against him.

In his herte he hadde a gret envie,  
Which caused hym bi outrage for to erre  
Ageyn Camyllus, which for his cheualrie  
The toun gouerned bothe in pes and werre.  
And for Marchus wolde hymself preferre  
Aboue that prynce in worshepe and honour,  
First of the peeple he gat hym gret fauour.

400

404

And as he was  
popular he drew  
many of the  
people to his  
side

And bi a maner of conspiracie  
He gadred hertis of the comounte,  
And drouh also onto his partie  
Gret multitude thoruhout the cite.  
And thus roos first the dreedful enmyte  
Withynne Rome, the story tellith thus,  
Atween these pryncis, Camyll & Manlius.

408

412

and caused  
great dissension.

Thus first the venym atween hem two was sowe  
Of hasti hatreede bi fals occasiouns.  
Which in the cite atween hih & lowe  
Caused of newe dyuers discenciouns,  
Aftir the[r] vnkouth straunge oppynyons;  
For eueri wiht drouh to his partie,  
As thei wer meued in ther fantasie.

416

420

To put a stop  
to the strife a  
dictator named  
Cornelius Cassius  
came from  
Tuscany and  
put Marcus in  
gaol,

But for to stynte this outrageous errour  
And thes hasti stryues furious,  
Ageyn fro Tuscan kam a dictatour,  
That tyme callid Cornelius Cassus,  
Which of wisdom blamed Manlius;

424

395. Which] with in R — that] be H.

396. hadde] om. R. 397. Iput] put R.

398. non othir] nomayn R.

410. thoruhout] thoruh R.

418. ther vnkouth straunge] ther straunge vncouth H.

For he caused such rumour in the town,  
And for his gilt comaunded hym to prisoun.

Which was in maner hyndryng to his name,  
And appalled in parti his noblesse;  
For a tyme gan teclipse his fame,  
But aftirward the cloude of that derknesse  
Bi comoun fauour was turned to cleernesse:  
For as it hadde be riht for the nonys,  
In his diffence the comouns roos attonis.

428 which for  
a time eclipsed  
his fame; but  
the commons  
soon rose in his  
defence,

First whan thei hadde among ther gret rumours,  
Mid of ther fell [&] hatful contencioun  
Shortli rebuked the worthi senatours,  
Because Marcus was sette in prisoun,  
Which hadde been so helplich to the town.  
Whom to delyuere thei dyuers menys souhte,  
And, as I fynde, euene thus thei wrouhte:

432

435 rebuking the  
Senate because  
it had allowed  
him to be so  
humiliated,

First thei cladde hem in moornyng clothes blake,  
Pale of ther facis, pitousli weepyng,  
Ther berd vnshaue, ther her to-reende & shake,  
Lik furious men up and down rennyng  
Tofor the prisoun, al the niht wakyng.  
And on his harmes pleyntly to be wreke,  
Thei gan manace the prisoun for to breke.

440

and, dressing  
themselves in  
black, set up  
such a wailing  
and tumult  
before the  
prison,

And for to stynte ther outraious clamour  
The senatour[e]s made anon ordeyne  
To delyuere hym out of his soiour,  
Losne his feteres and to breke his cheyne.  
And whan he was delyuered out of peyne,  
His list nat stynte, of hasti cruelte  
Of proude corage auengid for to be.

448

that the  
Senators  
ordered  
Marcus to be  
freed.  
452 But no sooner  
was he released  
than he wanted  
to be revenged.

And in his furious fel presumpcioun,  
Maugre the senat and tribunys euerichon,  
Saide he wolde gouerne Rome town.  
At whos outrage thei gan disdeyne anon;  
The peeplis hertis from hym wer agon,  
And for his pride thei bauisement  
Assigned hym to come to iugement.

456

and presump-  
tuously said  
that he would  
govern Rome  
himself. This  
lost him his  
popularity,

460

Forsake he was thoruhout the cite,  
Ther cam nat oon with hym of his kynreede,  
He fond non helpe in his aduersite,

[p. 214] and, forsaken by  
the commons,  
464 he was brought  
to judgment.

Sauff a fewe cam with hym in deede  
Of the comouns, ful feeble at such a neede.  
And thus, alas, he fond no resistance  
Was vailable onto his diffence.

468

Knowing no other help, he  
took off his clothes and  
shewed the wounds he had  
received in defending the  
city

But for socour constreyned and in dreede,  
Awey he putte his clothying & vesture,  
And naked stood[e], veraili in deede,  
Shewyng his woundis, which he dede endure  
At many scarmyssh and disconfiture.  
And for reskus, to speke in woordes fewe,  
The Capitoile to them he dide shewe.

472

and cried in a loud voice to his  
gods for aid.  
At this the people began to  
weep, and the judges were so  
put out of countenance  
that,

And in supportyng eek of his quarell,  
Meeuyng the peeple to rewe on his compleynt,  
First to his goddis loude he dide appell  
To preserue hym of that he was atteynt.  
The peeple aboute hym with teris al bespreynt,  
That the iuges astoned wer in deede,  
Wher-as thei sat ageyn hym to proceede.

476

fearing another rebellion, they  
had him led out secretly and  
thrown from the Capitol into the  
Tiber.

But secreli he was lad out of pres  
To a place callid Frowmentyne,  
And ther, alas, thei wer [so] merciles  
His doom bi rigour fulli to termyne,  
Spared nouter noblesse nor lyne:  
Fro the Capitoile, out of the cheef donioun,  
Lowe into Tibre for to be cast down.

484

No man can describe by  
writing the insecurity of  
those who labor for any  
community.

This was his eende, void of al fauour,  
Which no man wolde redressen nor amende,  
Bi cruelte cast out of that tour,  
Which he whilom most knihtli gan diffende.  
But what man can be writyng comprehende  
Thunseur socour founde in necessite  
To them that laboure for any comounte?

488

492

496

Let proud men who trust in  
worldly things consider the  
fate of Marcus.

Lat men beholde, that truste on worldli thynges,  
And namli them that be proude and hauteyn,  
Opne ther eyen, cast up ther lookynges  
To considre & see weel in certeyn,

500

475. reskew H.

479. loude] low R. 86. so] om. 4J, R.

488. nor] ne H. 490. a down H.

498. on] &amp; R.

499. them] thay H, thei R 3, they P — a horizontal line is drawn  
over the u in hauteyn, B.

500. Opne] Opon R.

Who trusteth Fortune, his truste is but in veyn!  
 And yif ye list a cleer exaample fynde,  
 Among remembreth on Marcus in your mynde. 504

What myhte auaille his noblesse in bataile?  
 Bies of gold, crownes of laurer?  
 His riche platis or his vnkouth maile,  
 His myhti sheeldis, that shon so briht & cleer? 505  
 Or his tryumphe, songe ferr & neer,  
 Or his victories for the cite wrouht? —  
 In his gret myscheeff auailed hym riht nouht.

What did his  
 prowess, his  
 crowns of gold  
 and laure,  
 his strong  
 armour and  
 tryumphe avail?

[Here Bochas writeth in part ayenst / suche as  
 cannot be content with suffisaunce / but vsurpe  
 to hihe dignitees.]<sup>1</sup>

HEER Iohn Bochas callith to memorye 512  
 The straunge salaire [and] þe famous guerdoun  
 Of them þat gat bi conquest & victorie  
 Honour of tryumphe withynne Rome toun;  
 How it was vsid, he maketh mencion,  
 Ceriousli reherseth the manere, 516  
 Which I shal write, yif ye list to heere.

Here John  
 Bochas tells of  
 the rewards  
 received by  
 those who won  
 victories for  
 Rome.

Auis was take first of estatys thre:  
 Of men of armys, which that wer present,  
 That sauh in deede the magnanymyte  
 Of hym that shal haue it be iugement;  
 Of the clergie thei muste haue eek assent,  
 And of the senat and peeple most notable, 520  
 Be preef souht out that he wer founde able. 524

A triumph was  
 granted with  
 the assent of  
 the three  
 estates,

This prynce also, outhur the capteyn,  
 Which shal the tryumphe resceyue of verray riht,  
 Withyne a chaar, ful richeli beseyn 523  
 He shal be set, of gold bornid briht,  
 Fret with stonis, which shal yiue a liht

and the  
 triumphator  
 rode through  
 the city in a  
 chariot of gold  
 adorned with  
 gems

506. laureer] Laureate H.

509. &] or H.

511. mischeffs R — *In inner margins*: "Hic deficit rubrica"

R, "deficit Rubrica" B.

513. salary H — and] *om.* R, J, P.

523. the] ther R.

525. preef] trowth H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 87 recto.



As Phebus doth in his midday speere,  
That no dirknesse aboute hym shal appeere. 532

drawn by  
four white  
horses.

This heuenli chaar shal for mor delit,  
To shewe thencres of his knihtli glorie,  
Be lad and drawe with foure steedis whiit  
Thoruh the cite in tokne of his victorie. 536  
And he shal han, for a synguler memorye,  
In his riht hand a palme of gold ful sheene,  
And on his hed a crowne of laureer greene.

He bore a palm  
of gold in his  
right hand and  
was crowned  
with laurel.  
Over his  
armour he wore  
a garment of  
purple powdered  
with palms, and  
in his left hand  
he held a  
crimson standard  
decorated with  
the arms of his  
prince. He was  
escorted to the  
Capitol like a  
conqueror,

He shal eek haue aboue al his armure, [p. 215] 540  
Poudrid with palmys a cote of purpil red,  
In his left hand, his quarellis for tassure,  
A standard round declaryng his manhed,  
And al aboue set upon the hed 544  
The pryncis armys, ful riche of apparaille,  
In whos quarell he accomplished the\* bataille.

And of custum the said[e] standard shall  
Be richeli depeynt with red colour. 548  
And so this kniht, this man most marciall,  
Shal be conveied lik a conquerour.  
And yit for mor encres of his honour,  
Vpon ther feet his prisoner es echon, 552  
Take bi his manhod, aboute his chaar shal gon,

his prisoners  
going on foot at  
his side, and  
was attended  
by musicians  
and poets who  
sang his praise.

The moste worthi faste bi his side,  
Al the remnant aftir on hym lokynge.  
Echon the poetes which in the toun abide 556  
Shal on hym waite at his hom komyng,  
Dites deuise and of his conquest syng;  
And streng menstrallis, to bern also record,  
Ther instrumentis shal touchyn of accord, 560

But to abate  
his pride  
the most  
miserable wretch  
in all  
Rome stood  
behind him,

Alle of entent to yiue hym mor corage.  
To the Capitoile so he shal be brouht,  
And list of pride he falle in non outrage,  
Nor surquedie withynne his owne thouht, 564  
The moste wrech shal of the toun be souht,  
Which of custum shal haue a staf in\* honde,  
And in the chaar behynde his bak up stonde.

545. of] in H.

546. the] in B, R, J.

556. 1st the] of R, of the J, P.

559. bern] been R.

560. of] at R.

566. in] on B, R, J, P

*Gnotos Eolitos* in Greek he sholde seyn,  
Which in our tunge pleynli doth expresse,  
"Knowe thi-silff," remembryng in certeyn  
Vpon Fortunys froward doubilnesse,  
On whom to triste may be no sekirnesse.  
And who that douteth wher that it be thus,  
Lat hym remembre the eende of Manlius.

What auailed his triumphes or his bies?  
Crownys of gold & perlid fressh tunycles?  
His hih prowesse, or al his cheualries,  
Synguler fihytyng or marcial particules,  
Newli remembred or rad in old cronicles?  
Peise his merites, & see how at the laste,  
How into Tibre ther champioun thei caste!

To his excus auailed neueradeel  
Fauour of comouns, carectes of his woundis,  
Nor to the goddis his lamentable appel,  
Nor remembraunce of ther fraunchised boundis,  
Teritories, nor wynyng of the groundis,  
Which that he wan with spendyng of his blood, —  
Al knet in on, to hym no sted thei stood.

Heer may ye see how Fortune sodenli  
Cleernesse of fame can chaunge to dirknesse,  
Glorie\* to reproche, worshepe to velany,  
And ioie passid to mortal heuynesse,  
Swetnesse of sauour\* into bittirnesse,  
And sobirnesse into furious rage,  
And old fraunchise to thraldam & seruage.

For ther was nouthur request nor praier  
That auailed to his delyueraunce.  
In cheynys fetrid, dedli of look & cheer,  
Abod the sentence of his fynal greuaunce, —  
Pale of face, with tremblyng contenaunce,  
Whan he, alas, gan mortalli aproche  
Of Tarpeia to the hidous roche.

568 saying, "Know  
thyself and  
remember the  
doubleness of  
Fortune, in  
whom there is  
no trust."

572

For what  
auailed the  
triumphs of  
Marcus?

576

580

He was thrown  
into the Tiber,  
and the favour  
of the commons,  
his appeal to the  
gods, and the  
remembrance  
of his past  
services were as  
nothing.

588

Thus can  
Fortune  
suddenly change  
the brightness  
of fame to  
darkness, and  
glory to  
reproach.

592

Fettered in  
chains, he  
awaited his  
sentence, and  
was led pale  
and trembling  
to the Tarpeian  
Rock.

596

600

568. Gnothy seanton P — sholde] shal H, R 3.

573. douteth] douteh R.

576. &] or H, R 3, H 5, P.

577. prowesse] prow R.

578. particles R, J, P, particlis H, R 3, particules H 5.

579. new H. 589. may ye] men may H. 591. Gloire B, J, R.

593. sauour] fauour B, H, R, R 3, H 5.

594. forious R.

595. hraldam R.

This rock was  
named after a  
lady called  
Tarpeia, who,  
guilty of  
treason, was  
buried under it.

Of Tarpeia this roche bar the name  
Aftir a ladi, as maad is mencioun,  
Callid Tarpeia, which fill in gret diffame  
Because she was assentid to tresoun,  
Taue brouht enmyes into Rome toun.  
Wherof convict, hir stori is weel knowe,  
Vnder that roche she was Idolue lowe.

604

608

And it was  
also called  
Carmenton,  
after Carmentis,  
a woman of  
great influence,  
who built the  
Capitol and  
invented our  
alphabet.

This roche also was callid Carmentoun  
Afftir a woman of gret auctorite  
Callid Carmentis, which thoruh hir hih renoun  
The Capitoile made in that cite.  
And she fond lettres first of our A. B. C.,  
And kunyng hadde, among hir werkes all,  
Declare afforn[e] thyng that sholde befall.

616

Marcus found  
neither favour  
nor friendship.

And on this harde sturdi roche of ston,  
Fro the Capitoile Marcus was cast down.  
Othir fauour nor frenshepe fond he non,  
For alle his batailes fouhten for the toun.  
The comouns hertis wer turnid up-so-down,  
Whos loue is lik, preued at assay,  
A blase of fyr, now briht & now away.

620

623

The common  
people may  
make promises,  
but when the  
need comes they  
do not keep  
them,

The comoun peep[le] may hote and crie faste, [p. 216]  
As ther hertis stedfast were & stable;  
But at a neede ther promys wil nat laste,  
Of ther corages thei be so remevable.\*  
To folwe resoun gerish and vntretable,  
Lihtli declynyng, and that is ful gret routhe,  
Aftir oppynyouns, & nothyng aftir trouthe.

628

and so  
Marcus was  
deceived and  
left to his fate.

This Manlius was of his trust deceyued,  
Whos lust vnleeful departed was on tweyne,  
First whan of pride he wolde ha be resceyued  
To hih estat, which he myht nat atteyne,  
Wherthoruh the senat gan at hym disdeyne,  
And the comouns, ay fals at such a neede,  
Left hym in myscheeff, & took of hym non heede.

632

636

609. Idolue lowe] I don throwe H.  
616. fall H.  
627. remevable] remuable B.  
631. This] Thus H.

## ¶ Lenvoye.

IN this tragedie men may beholde & see  
 The perelious damages of fals ambicioun,  
 Of them that benat content with *per* degre,  
 But wolde up clymbe, lik ther oppynyoun,  
 To hih estat be vsurpacioun, —  
 Which nat considre the sentence of scripture,  
 In a good mene men lengest may endure.

Who that vsurpeth to hier dignite  
 Than apperteneth to his condicioun,  
 In roial chaieres for to make his see,  
 And hath no tittle of lyne nor resoun,  
 Thoruh froward pride ful ofte he is put doun;  
 For lak he seethnat how eueri creature  
 In a good mene lengest may endure.

Whan Dedalus tauhte his sone [to] flee,  
 He bad hym first, of hih disgresioun,  
 Fro Phebus heete keepe his wynges fre,  
 And fro Neptunvs cold congellacioun,  
 Menyng herbi, for short conclusioun,  
 That who that list with ioie his staat assure,  
 In a good mene he lengest shal endure.

Remembre the manhod & magnanymyte  
 Of Marcus Manlius, which be presumpcioun  
 Wolde haue gouerned Rome the cite,  
 Maugre the senat reulid that myhti toun,  
 Which turnid aftir to his confusioun,  
 For he sauh nat, such was his auenture,  
 In a good mene men lengest may endure.

Sume in ther grettest hih prosperite,  
 Of froward corage and furious mocion,  
 In ther gret wele, bi fals duplicite  
 Han a maner straunge condicioun,  
 Nat to be content with plente nor foisoun,  
 Bi a fals etik, which of ther nature  
 In a good mene ne cannot long endure.

But in this erthe grettest felicite  
 Is hertis ese, richest pocessioun,

This tragedy  
 tells us of the  
 peril that lies  
 in the false  
 ambition of  
 those who, not  
 contented with  
 their degree,  
 wish to climb  
 to higher estate  
 by usurpation.

644

Such people  
 are often put  
 down; they  
 cannot see that  
 all creatures  
 best endure  
 648 when they live  
 in a happy  
 mean.

652

Dædalus told  
 his son to fly  
 neither too high  
 nor too low,

656

but Marcus  
 Manlius,  
 660 content with no  
 moderation,

664

was like  
 many others  
 who in their  
 highest  
 668 prosperity are  
 most  
 dissatisfied.

672

Heart's ease  
 is the greatest  
 joy on earth,

652. to] *om.* R, J, H, R 3.

659. &amp;] &amp; the R.

674. richesse H.



With suffisaunce content for to be,  
Of worldli trouble teschewe thoccasioun, 676  
Meuyng no quarellis, causyng no discencioun,  
Nor cleyme nothyng which hard is to recure,  
Sithe in good mene men lengest may endure.

and this,  
Princes, you  
should re-  
member; for  
the envy of  
high climbing  
causes only  
strife, and no  
community is  
to be trusted.

Pryncis, remembreth in your most mageste, 680  
Envie of clymbyng causith diuisioun.  
Beth of accord, trustith\* no comounte,  
Which, at a poynt, is but decepcioun,  
And specialli fleeth symulacioun. 684  
Ye may in Marcus seen a pleyn figure,  
Which for ambicioun myhte no while endure.

[How Neptanabus kyng of Egipt / was by xerses  
constreyned to fle his kyngdam.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas next  
began to tell  
briefly the story  
of Nectanebes,  
king of Egypt,

AFFTIR the fall of Marcus Manlius,  
Bochas anon gan his stile dresse 688  
Breefli to telle of Neptanabus,  
Kyng of Egipt, and of his gret richesse,  
Seyng afforn[e], in al his noblesse  
Bi vnkouth crafft, how he ne myhte chese, 692  
That in al haste his crowne he sholde lese.

who foresaw by  
astrology that  
he should lose  
his kingdom.

For he was kunzyng in especial,  
And riht expert, as maad is mencioniun, 696  
In alle the sciences callid liberal,  
And knew afforn bi calculacioun •  
How God wolde make a transmygracioun  
Of his kyngdam, & pleynli to reporte,  
The lond of Perse to Grekis ful transporte. 700

Forced to flee by  
Xerxes, he  
went to Grece  
as a magician

For bi kyng Zerses out of his cuntre,  
Maugre his tresor, his cunyng & his miht,  
This Neptanabus constreyned was to flee, 704  
Durste nat abide to haue of hym a siht.  
And into Grece he drouh hym anon riht,  
Nat lik a kyng, but aftir old writyngis,  
Lik a magicien he wrouhte wonder thynges.

677. quarell H — 2nd no] *om.* H, R 3, H 5, P.  
682. trustith] trust on B, R 3, trust in H 5, P.  
693. lese] *om.* R.  
704. of hym to have H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 88 recto.

Vpon fortune fether to proceede,  
 Bi his kunyng he gretli forthered was,  
 And bi his sleiht werkyng eek in deede  
 He was aqueynted with queen Olympias,  
 And so secre, pleynli this the caas,  
 That upon hir, men seide be deemyng,  
 Gat Alisaundre, the grete myhti kyng.

[p. 217] 708 and there  
 became so  
 intimate with  
 Olympias,  
 that men said  
 Alexander was  
 his son.

712

But how he fledde out of his regioun,  
 Of his images nor his illusiouns  
 Bochas mak[e]th no maner mencioune,  
 Nor how he wrouhte be incantaciouns,  
 Nor of his sotil operaciouns,  
 Nor how that he, lik a man, be nihte  
 Whilom appeered in the queenys sihte.

716 But Bochas  
 does not tell  
 about either  
 his flight or  
 his incantations,  
 or how he  
 appeared like a  
 man by night  
 to the queen.

720

Sauf of his deth[e], Bochas writ riht nouht,  
 Remembryng nouthur the tyme nor the date,  
 How Alisaundre and he\* togidre han souht  
 The cours of sterris toward eue late,  
 And how his sone, lik as was his fate,  
 Doun from a bregge bi ful mortal wrak  
 Cast hym bakward, & so his nekke brak.

724 He wrote only  
 of his death,  
 and how  
 Alexander  
 threw him  
 off a bridge and  
 broke his neck.

728

[How Pausonoy Duk of Lacedemoyne was exiled  
 by them of Athenys.]<sup>1</sup>

**T**HIS was his ende, & aftir this Bochas  
 Gan in al haste his stile [to] auauunce  
 Of Pausonyos to tell the pitous caas,  
 And al the maner of his woful chaunce.  
 Which was a duk, & hadde in goueraunce  
 Lacedemoyne, ther foundyng a cite  
 Which of old tyme was callid Bisante.

Pausanias, duke  
 of Sparta,

732

Thei of Athenys that cite gat with myht  
 And it conquered bi ther cheualrie;  
 And aftirward, wher it wer wrong or riht,  
 Thei exiled the same Pausanye.

736 was exiled by  
 the Athenians  
 and ended his  
 life in poverty  
 and sorrow.

716. nor] nor of H. 720. nihte] myht R.  
 724. Alisaundre and he] he and Alisaundre B, R, J, P.  
 725. euen R.  
 730. to] om. J, R, H, R 3, H 5, P, tavaunce Add.  
 731. Pausanyos H, R 3, Pausonoy R, J, Pausonyos H 5, Pausa-  
 nias P.  
 736. gat] gret R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 88 recto.

And thus Fortune thoruh hir fals envie  
 Caused that duk, withoute mor delaies,  
 In sorwe and pouert for to eende his daies.

740

[How Heliarchus the tirant for extorcion and oppres-  
 sion, was slayn, by the knight Leonydes.]<sup>1</sup>

Because Heli-  
 archus troubled  
 all Persia with  
 his tyranny,

**A**FFTIR the fal[le] sothli of thes tweyne,  
 Iohn Bochar was meued of corage  
 For to reherse with al his bisi peyne  
 The grete furie & thodious rage  
 Of Heliarchus, which bi gret outrage,  
 Thoun he nat was famous in cheualrie,  
 He noied al Perse with his tirannye.

744

748

Bochas became  
 angry and  
 resolved to  
 write against  
 tyrants in  
 general,

Wherfor Bochas gan at hym disdeyne,  
 Caste he wolde, onli for his sake,  
 Touche of tirauntes mo than on or tweyne,  
 And bi writyng geyn\* hem a werre make.  
 And in his hande he gan a penne take,  
 Tolde in ordre the pereilous pestilence  
 Which thei wrouhte bi mortal violence.

752

756

declaring  
 that Fortune  
 had good cause  
 to shew her  
 power against  
 them.

First he declareth how Fortune of riht,  
 Ageyn tirantis furious & wood,  
 Hath ful [good] cause for to shewe hir myht,  
 Tappalle ther dignites in which\* thei stood, —  
 Such as reioysshe for to sheede blood,  
 Do nat ellis but laboure & deuise  
 To spoille the peeples in many sondri wise.

760

Heliarchus was  
 mortal enemy  
 of a city called  
 Heraclea, and  
 brought the  
 entire country  
 to mischief

And Heliarchus thoruh his cruelte,  
 And his contriyed fals extorsions  
 Was mortal enmy to a fair cite  
 Callid Heracie, & many othir touns.  
 And bi [his] extort fals oppressiouns,  
 As the deede concluded, at a preeff,  
 Al that contre\* he brouhte to myscheeff.

764

768

740. hir] his R.

743. falle] fallis H. 745. For] & for H.

753. ageyn B. 759. good] om. J, R, P.

760. which] which that] B, R, J, H 5, P.

760. which] which that] B, R, J, H 5, P.

764. Elearchus P. 767. Heracie] heliarchie H

770. contre] countee B — to] vn to H, H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 88 recto.

Turnyng his grace & fauour to hatreede,  
 Merci & pite onto cruele,  
 Fraunchise of peeplis to seruitute & dreede,  
 Oppressid ther fredam & ther old liberte.  
 And all ther statutis, bi which thei wer maad fre,  
 He interrupted of force & nat of riht,  
 Which made hym odious in eueri mannys siht.

772 by oppressing  
 the people and  
 revoking their  
 liberties, until  
 he was hated  
 by everyone.

But to restreyne his grete extorsiouns  
 Fortune this while was nat rek[e]les:  
 For his horrible abhomynaciouns  
 She gan tauale hym, this goddesse merciles,  
 Bi a good kniht callid Leonides,  
 Which with a felawe born of that contre  
 Cast on this tiraunt auengid for to bee.

780 But Fortune  
 punished his  
 abominable  
 conduct  
 through a good  
 knight,  
 Leonides, who  
 with a comrade  
 took vengeance  
 and slew him.

Thei dempte it was an almesse deede,  
 To sette ther lond in quiete & in ese,  
 Of a tirant the furious blood to sheede,  
 His inportable malis for tappese,  
 Which to ther cite dede so gret disese.  
 And of assent, with ther suerdis keene.  
 Thei slouh the tiraunt in ther mortal teene.

788

Of whos deth many a man was fayn, [p. 218]  
 And specialli of Heracle the cite,  
 Dempte it was meedful that he was so slayn,  
 To sette in quiete al a comounte.  
 Loo, heer men may the rihtful guerdoun see  
 Of tirauntis, which bi ther violence  
 Toppresse the péeple ha[ue] no conscience!

792 Many a man  
 was glad of his  
 death.

796

[How the vicious Denys kyng of Cicile slouh his  
 brethre and kynrede, and aftir exiled deied at  
 mischeff.]<sup>1</sup>

A FFTIR this tiraunt, with a ful heuy cheere  
 And contenance pitous and lamentable,  
 Onto Bochas Denys dede appeere,  
 Which in tirannye was most importable,  
 Thoruh [al] his land hatful and reпреuable.  
 But, for al that, he gan myn auctour preie  
 Of his maneres sumwhat to write & seie.

800 After this  
 tyrant,  
 Dionysius,  
 tyrant of  
 Syracuse,  
 appeared:

804

785. elmesse R.  
 801. Dionise P.



- but Bochas  
would not  
take the trouble  
to mention his  
lineage, because  
he was so full  
of all vices.
- Bochas list nat rehersen his lynage  
Nor make no processe of his genealogie,  
Because he was, with al his gret outrage,  
Ful of alle vices, pride and lecherie,  
Of auarice, of ire and of envie.  
In Cecile he heeld his roial see  
At Siracusic, a myhti strong cite. 808
- Cursed and  
malicious of  
nature, he slew  
all his relations  
that he might  
rule alone  
undisturbed.
- This Denys was cursed of nature,  
Most malicious bothe of thouht & deede;  
For, as it is remembrid in scripture,  
He slouh his brethre, his cosyns & kynreede, 812  
That he allone myhte in pes posseede  
Withoute trouble or interupcioun  
Of al Cecile the myhti regioun.
- He was  
idle, licentious  
and a drunkard,
- Among his\* vices, Bochas doth specefie, 820  
He gan drawn onto idilnesse,  
Folwede his lustis of foul lecherie,  
And ofte of custum he fill in dronkenesse,  
And thouhte it was most souereyn blissidnesse, 824  
Lik as he hadde be maister of Fortune,  
To folwe his lustis & ay theryn contune.
- and became  
blind and fat,  
and with the  
help of robbers  
and aliens  
unjustly slew  
nearly all the  
inhabitants of  
his city.
- He wex riht fat & wonder corciuous,  
And his eien gan derken of ther siht, 828  
That vnnethe this man most vicious  
Ne miht nat weel beholde the daies liht.  
And of malis this tiraunt ageyn riht,  
With helpe of robbours & of fals foreyns, 832  
Slouh of his cite nih al the citeseysns.
- Although it is  
unpleasant  
to hear or  
tell about his  
vicious life,  
I shall  
briefly relate  
how he made  
his men despoil  
a large number  
of women of  
their garments  
in the temple  
at Cythera,
- His vicious lyff in ordre to reherse  
Wer contagious to the audience;  
His extort pillages wrouhte in Grece & Perse, — 836  
For to write or telle hem in sentence  
Wolde infecte the heir with pestilence.  
But I wil breefli remembryn & descryue  
The sacrileges which he dede his lyue. 840
- In Venus temple beside Citheroun  
A gret[e] noumbre of wommen he leet call,  
Ful weel beseyn; and be oppressioun  
He made his meyne vnwarli on hem fall. 844

806. his] this R. 816. 2nd his] om. H.

820. his] all B, R, J, P. 826. theryn] ther H.

833. the] his H.

Dispoiled them, so that on and all  
Bi his outrage and froward violence,  
Thei naked stood echon in his presence.

And whan he sauh ther shap & ther fetures,  
And ches such out as wer to his plesaunce,  
Robbyng the remnaunt, took from them *per* vestures  
And leet hem goon withoutyn ordenaunce.

848 and after he  
looked them  
over and  
chose such as  
pleased him,  
sent the rest  
away naked.

And for this vnkouth abhomynable chaunce  
Ther cite Locrois aros with myhti hond,  
For his outrage banshyng hym ther lond.

852

Another tyme he dide also soiourne  
Withyne the temple, lik as it is told,  
Of Iubiter, sone onto Saturne.  
Ther beholdyng his reliques manyfold,  
Sauh among other a mantel large of gold,  
Wherupon whan he caste his look,  
That riche iewel onto his eus he took.

856 Once when he  
saw in the  
temple of  
Jupiter a mantle  
of gold among  
the god's  
possessions,

860

And thus he saide, hymselfen to excuse, —  
"It was to heuy and to comerous  
In somer sesoun that mantel for to vse,  
Because it was to large & ponderous."  
And ouermor he aleggid for hym thus:  
"Sithe the garnement forgid was of gold,  
For wynter sesoun how it was to cold."

864 he said that it  
was too heavy  
for summer and  
not warm  
enough for  
winter, and  
took it for  
himself,

868

And whan he gan away the mantel pulle,  
Than riht anon this tiraunt deceyuable  
Gaff hym another sengle maad of wolle,  
Affermede, sothli it was mor couenable, —  
To other sesoun mor meete and agreable,  
Concludyng thus: "for somer it was liht,\*  
And warm for wyntir to were the frosti niht."

872 leaving in  
exchange a  
singlet made of  
wool, which he  
affirmed was  
light enough  
for summer and  
warm for  
winter.

Another tyme, this tiraunt eek also, [p. 219]  
Which was of herte most auaricious,  
Entrid onys the temple of Appollo  
And of his sone Esculapius.  
And whan this tiraunt fel & contrarious  
Beheld Appollo berdles, that was old,  
And Esculapius with a berd\* of gold,

876 Another time  
he saw a  
statue of  
Apollo with a  
smooth chin and  
an Esculapius  
wearing a  
beard of gold;

880

854. banysshying H.

861. vse H.

869. mantel] matil H.

874. liht] to liht B, R, J.

876. R omits to line 2212 inclusive. 882. long berd B, J.

and, saying that  
it was strange  
that the father  
should be  
beardless, pulled  
away  
Æsculapius'  
golden beard  
and made off  
with it.

Quod Denys thanne, "as seemeth onto me,  
Heer is a straunge froward conveyence, 884  
That the fader berdles sholde be,  
The sone berdid stonde in his presence."  
Made anon bi sturdi violence  
To take away the berd, which in his siht 888  
Of most fyn gold shon so cleer & briht.

Wherever he  
went he robbed  
the temples,  
and lived like a  
thief,

Thoruh Grece and Perse wher-euer he dede gon,  
In al the templis this was his vsaunce:  
The statli reliques with many riche ston 892  
And massiff tablis of myhti gret substaunce,  
To take them alle that wer to his plesaunce.  
He spared non; thus lyuyng lik a theef  
Til he be vengauce was brouht [vn]to myscheeff. 896

until the  
Syracusans had  
enough of his  
evil habits and  
banished him,  
and he died  
a fugitive.

Syracusany, wher he was crowned kyng,  
Alle of assent, ther is no mor to seyne,  
For his outragis & vicious lyuyng,  
Thei ban[y]shed hym neuer to kome ageyn. 900  
And so this tiraunt, vacaunt, wente in veyn  
Aboute the world as a fals fugityff;  
And so at myscheeff this Denys loste his lyff.

## [Lenvoy.]

This tragedie  
gives a warning  
to all rulers  
not to be  
pillagers and  
tyrants.

**T**HIS tragedie yiueth a warnyng 904  
To all[e] tho that haue domynacioun  
Ouer the peeple, prince, duk or kyng,  
Teschewe rauyne and fals extorsioun.  
Bit them considre, how bi thoccasioun 908  
Of foul pillage & froward tirannye  
This said Denys at myscheef muste die.

Dionysius slew  
indiscriminately  
and rejoiced in  
robbery and  
murder;

First he compassed, falsli imagynyng,  
To slen the citeseyns of his roial toun, 912  
His brethre, his cosyns, his kynrede nat sparyng,  
Brouht al his blood onto destruccioun,  
In slaughtre he hadde such delectacioun,  
Reioisshyng euere in moordre & robberie, 916  
Which caused hym at myscheef for to die.

884. froward conveyence] disconvenyence H.

905. tho] om. H.

911. *This stanza is misplaced next to the last one of the Envoy* H  
— First he] He also H.

To spoille templis was most his reioysshynge,  
 Took al ther tresours to his pocessioun,  
 Tablis of gold with stonys fressh shynynge;  
 Eek fro the\* goddis the reliques he took doun  
 Wher-euer he rod in any regioun.  
 Whos sacrilege & compassed felonie  
 Caused hym vnwarli in myscheeff for to die.

920 sacrilegious, he  
 delighted most  
 in spoiling  
 temples and  
 the gods of their  
 relics.

In Venus temple, be record of writyng,  
 He dede a foul froward abusioun,  
 Al gentil-women that cam ther to offryng,  
 Them he dispoiled, as maad is mencioun,  
 Leet hem go naked, withoute excepcioun.  
 For which diffame & gret vngent[el]rie  
 He bashed was & dede in myscheef die.

924

928 In the temple  
 of Venus he  
 foully stripped  
 gentlewomen  
 of their  
 clothes and  
 let them go  
 naked. Finally  
 he was  
 banished, and  
 died in mischief.  
 Noble Princes,  
 remember that  
 such behaviour  
 932 has no good  
 end.

Noble Pryncis, remembreth on this thyng:  
 Compassed malis & fals collusioun  
 Mut haue euel eende\* & come to rek[el]nyng,  
 Fraude ay with fraude resceyueth his guerdoun.  
 Hath this in mynde, concludyng on resoun,  
 That all tirauntis, pleyntli to specefie,  
 Hadde heer short lyff or dede at myscheeff die.

936

¶ Thauctour ageyn presumpcious [peple and] Princis  
 halding pem-self goddis.

YE folk that been astonid in your auys  
 To seen tirauntes þat wer\* incorrigible  
 Left from ther sees, þat held hemsilf\* so wis,  
 Thouhte ther poweer was verray inuyncible,  
 Thouh tofor God nothyng is impossible;  
 Wherfor remembreth, & doth nothyng meruaile,  
 With vnwar fallis thouh Fortune hem assaile.

940 Ye who are  
 astonished to  
 see incorrigible  
 tyrants, who  
 deemed them-  
 selves  
 invincible,  
 lifted from their  
 thrones, should

For whan tirauntis been sette on hih[e] stages  
 Off dignites, regnyng lik wood leouns,  
 Ful harde it is to wresten ther corages  
 Outher to tempre ther disposiciouns.  
 Worldli felicite so blyndeth ther resouns,

948 know that  
 nothing is  
 impossible to  
 God.

921. the] ther B, J.

934. eende] eendynge B, endynge J, ending P.

939. *The omission in the heading is supplied from J, leaf 89 recto.*

940. wer] been B.

941. held hemsilf] hemsilf held B, hem helde J.



As thei to God wer egal of poweer,  
And hadde Fortune vnder ther daungeer. 952

One need only  
think of  
Dionysius.

Record of Denys, that ofte was affraid [p. 220]  
Bassaut of Fortune, lik as was his fate,  
For vicious lyuyng thre tymes disamaied,  
As his stori remembreth of old date. 956

[¶] Next on the ryng now kometh Pollicrate  
With oon Victurbius, tirauntis of Itaille,  
Regnyng lik wolues toppressen the poraille.

Polycrates and  
Victurbius were  
tyrants of  
Italy, who  
reigned like  
wolves; and  
when such men  
believe in their  
pride that God  
cannot put them  
down,

For whan tirauntis in dyuers regiouns 960  
Of surquedie cachche an oppynyoun,  
That ther estatis & domynaciouns  
Sholde euere endure bi long successioun,  
As Godde nor Fortune myhte nat putte hem down, 964  
But as thei wern in ther estat roiall  
This world to reule, to bothe too egall.

and, having lost  
all shame and  
dread, laugh  
at Fortune,

[First] toward God thei ha[ue] lost shame & dreed  
Touchynng his guerdouns outhur of ioie or peyne, 968  
Indifferent atween trouthe or falsheed, —  
Ther lust Iserued; no fors who lauhhe or pleyne.  
God is forgetyn; at Fortune thei disdeyne,  
As bothe wern recleymed to ther lure, 972  
Falsli transcendyng the boundis of mesure.

sometimes God  
allows her to  
favour them for  
a time, as if  
she really were  
willing to  
accomplish their  
desires.

For which sumtyme, as bookes specefie,  
God list suffre, as maad is mencionn,  
That Fortune bi a maner moquerie 976  
Fauoureth summe folk, lik ther oppynyoun  
Tenhaunce ther poweer bi fals decepcioun,  
As she wer set, pleynli for to scie,  
To serue ther lust & durst nat disobeie. 980

[How kyng Pollicrate for extorcion and tirannye  
was honged til euery ioynt went from othir.]<sup>1</sup>

This was the  
case with  
Polycrates,  
tyrant of  
Samos,

**R**ECORD I take on proude Pollicrate,  
Tiraunt of Sammois, beside þe se Egge,  
Which sore laboured erli & eek late,  
Ageyn conscience, of furious cruelte, 984

953. Dionise P. 957. No indication of new ¶ in MSS.

967. First] om. J.

971. forgotten P — Fortune] om. J.

975. list] list nat H.

982. Samos P.

Tabounde in richesse & for to ha[ue] plente  
Of worldli tresours, deemyng that Fortune ay  
To his desirs ne durste nat sey nay.

Fortune to hym bi many dyuers signe  
Shewed outward gret toknis of plesaunce,  
Was to hym eek riht fauourable & benigne  
In al hir port bamaner attendaunce,  
As she hadde been vnder his obeissaunce  
To stuffe his coffres *with* tresours lokked faste,  
Of fals entent to mokke hym atte laste.

988 to whom  
Fortune shewed  
so many  
favours that it  
appeared almost  
as if she were  
in his power.

992

Alle worldli richesse his lustis dede obeie;  
And whan he fond she was so fauourable,  
For a sesoun, as she that list to pleie,  
This blynde goddess, vnseur & euere\* vnstable,  
Set hym so hih[e] up at Famys table,  
Of fals entent, in his estat roiall  
Whan he sat hiest to make hym haue a fall.

996 And so he  
believed. But  
when he was  
seated highest  
at the table of  
fame, she  
decided to give  
him a fall.

1000

For in hymself of pride he gan to deeme  
How that he stood most in prosperite  
Of them that wered crowne or diadeeme,  
Aboue al other in most felicite.

1004 He thought in  
his pride that he  
was an equal  
of the gods,

And thus enhaunsed in his roial see,  
Thouhte hym egal with goddis in comvne,  
Fer from al daunger of Fate or of Fortune.

1008

And for tatempte of goddis the poweer,  
And of Fortune the variaunt doubilnesse,  
He took a ryng of gold ful briht & cleer,  
Theryn a rubi of excellent richesse,\*  
Sekyng occasioun of sum newe heuynesse,  
Which neuer afforn hadde knowe of no such thyng, —  
Into the se anon he cast his ryng,

1012 and to tempt  
their power  
and the  
doubleness of  
Fortuna, he  
cast a rich ring  
into the sea,

Dise[s]peired ageyn [it] to recure,  
For he dempte it was an impossible.  
But rihte anon fissheres of auenture,  
Lik a meruaile verray incredible,  
Among the wawes hidous & horrible  
Caste in ther nettis, yiff it wolde auaile,  
Takyng a fissh, the ryng in his entraille.

1016 not hoping ever  
to see it again.  
Yet a fish  
swallowed it and  
soon afterwards  
was caught and  
presented to  
him at a feast,  
and his carver  
found the ring  
in its inside,

1020

998. & euere] euere & B.

999. so hihe up at] hih upon H. 1004. or] of H.

1008. al] al þe H — 2nd of] om. J — or] & H.

1012. richesse] rednesse B, J.

Which was presented at a solempnite  
 To Pollicrate with ful gret reuerence, 1024  
 Whan he sat crowned in his most dignite  
 At a feeste of famous excellence.  
 The fissh vndon anon in his presence,  
 Mid thentrailles his keruere fond the ryng 1028  
 Of auenture, & took it to the kyng.

which made  
 Polycrates  
 believe that  
 Neptune, not  
 daring to offend  
 his majesty,  
 had restored to  
 him his ring.

Which dempte of pride and hih presumpcioun,  
 That Neptunvs, god of the salte se,  
 Hadde of his ryng maad restitucioun, 1032  
 And durste nat offende his mageste.  
 Wherupon a fantasie kauht he,  
 Nouthur heuenli goddis no[r] Fortune blynde of siht  
 Wer bothe vnhardy tatempte ageyn his myht. 1036

But God and  
 Fortune were  
 aware of his  
 presumption and  
 threw him down  
 when he least  
 expected it.

His gret outrage to God was nat vnknowe; [p. 221]  
 And his presumpcioun Fortune hath weel espied,  
 For which she maad aduersite been[de] hir bowe,  
 And of hir wheel the spokes she hath so guyed, 1040  
 Wheron he sat most richeli magnified,  
 That he vnwarli doun from his hih noblesse  
 Was brouht ful lowe in sorwe & wrechchidnesse.

Fortune is  
 never more to  
 be feared than  
 when she is  
 most smiling.

In worldly\* glorie nothyng is mor to dreede, 1044  
 Than whan Fortune is most blandisshyng,  
 And that hir flatry is fret with worldli meede,  
 Hih on hir wheel to make foolis synge;  
 Than of hir nature sorwe she doth [in] brynge, — 1048  
 Witnesse of princis, of olde or newe date,  
 And record also of proude Pollicrate.

Her temple is  
 made of glass,  
 not steel, and  
 her crystal ice  
 is unsafe to  
 stand upon.

Sumtyme he sat hih on Fortunys wheel,  
 Of prosperite with bemys cleer shynyng, 1052  
 Whos temple is maad of glas & nat off steel;  
 Hir\* cristal yys vnwarli dissoluyng,  
 Thouh it be fressh outward in shewyng,  
 Vnseur to stonde on, & brotil for tabide, 1056  
 Who trusteth most, most likli is to slide.

Orontes, Darius'  
 constable, began  
 a war on Samos,

This gerissh queen, of cheer & face double,  
 Withdrouh hir fauour & began to varie  
 Fro Pollicrates, sette hym in sorwe & trouble, 1060  
 Wex ageyn hym maliciousli contrarie,

1028. be Entraile H, the entrail R 3.

1040. hir wheel] his queele H.

1044. worldly] wordlis B, J — glorie] ioy P. 1054. Hir] His B.

Causyng Orontes, constable with kyng Darie,  
Maugre this tiraunt in his most cruelte,  
To gynne a werre on Sammoys his cite.

1064

And whan his glorie was most cleer of liht,  
And his noblesse shon hiest atte fulle,  
Fortune gan thoruh hir chaungable myht  
Of his prosperite the fethris for to pull.  
And thanne at erst his corage gan to dull,  
And alle his pride vnwarli for tappalle,  
Whan he was spoiled of his richessis alle.

and when Polycrates' glory shone brightest, Fortune began to pull the feathers of his prosperity.

1068

First whan Orontes his contre gan assaill,  
This Pollicrate of sodeyn auenture  
Outraied was & taken in bataill

1072

He was taken in battle and chained in prison;

Bi a full pereilous mortal disconfiture.  
Thus koude Fortune bryngen him\* to lure  
Thoruh hir vnwar, ougli, fals disdeynes,  
Lad into\* prisoun & bounde in stronge cheynis.

1076

The peep[le] [that] duelte withynne his regeoun  
Reioiss[he]d in herte to seen hym suffre peyne.

1080

and because he was a tyrant, his subjects were glad to see him suffer.

His tirannye, his fals extorsioun

Caused that thei dede at hym disdeyne;  
For of his deth[e] no man list compleyne.

Men thoruh the wor[l]d be glad & ha[ue] plesaunce

1084

To seen a tiraunt brouht onto myschaunce.

Foure thynges his tormentes dede augmente:

Sodeyn departyng from his old richesse,

And that he sauh ech man in his entente

Of his myscheef ha[ue] so gret gladnesse;

Hanged he was, myn auctour berth witnesse,

And heeng so long in tempest, reyn & thonder,

Til eueri ioynt from other went assonder.

1092

He lost his great possessions and saw that men rejoiced at his fall; and after that, he was hanged.

To beestis wilde & foulis\* rauynous,

Naked he heeng; such was his auenture:

To alle folk he was so odious,

Had in despiht off euery creature,

At his departyng denied sepulture, —

1096

So odious he was to all folk, that they even denied him a decent burial.

1065. liht] siht H.

1068. for] om. H.

1071. richesse H.

1076. fortune koude bryngen hir B, fortune coude bringen him J.

1078. onto B. 1079. that] om. J.

1086. his tormentes] this Tiraunt H.

1093. foulis] folkis B, J.



Guerdoun for tirauntis vengable & rekles,  
That kannat suffre the peeple to lyue in pes.

Thus may  
tyrants, who  
resemble cruel  
wolves, find  
their reward  
in hell with  
Polycrates.

Thus may tirauntis excedy[n]g ferr per boundis 1100

Bi fals outrage, ful weel resembled be

To cruel wolouys or to furious houndis,

Fret with an etik of gredi cruelte.

To stau[n]che ther hunger auailleth no plente. 1104

Which for ther surfetis, froward for to reede,

With Pollicrates in helle shal ha[ue] ther meede.

[How the tiraunt Alisaundre/ slouh his philosophre  
Calistenes with othir for seying trouthe.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas next  
heard the sad  
story of  
Callisthenes,  
dismembered  
for his fidelity,

**A**MONG alle stories to tell þe pitous caas  
Of woful pleyntiffs þat put hemsilf in pres 1108

With weepyng eyen, myn auctour Iohn Bochas

Was meued in herte nat to be rek[el]les

To write the falle of Calistenes,

[The] which, alas, as it is remembred, 1112

Was for his trouthe on pecis al dismembred.

and thought  
that even a  
man with a  
heart of stone  
would be  
moved by it to  
tears.

For whan Bochas his story gan aduerte,

He dempte anon in his fantasie,

No man hadde so harde a stonen herte, 1116

That mihte of riht his eyen keepen drie,

To seen the processe of his tormentrie.

Yit gan myn auctour his woful penne proffre

To write the wrong don to this philosophre. 1120

Callisthenes,  
virtuous in  
youth, devoted  
his best years  
to philosophy,

This Calistenes, in youthe riht wcel thewed,

His greene age promotid to doctryne,

Bi influence of heuenli fate adewed,

Gretli to proffite in moral disciplyne, 1124

Disposid of nature bi grace, which is dyuyne,

To conquere, as bookis specifice,

The noble surname of filosofhie.

at whose  
breasts he was  
fed, and to  
whose milk no  
earthly balm  
may be  
compared.

Of his merites, famous & notable, 1128

Philosophie dede hir besi peyne

To yiue hym souke, because that he was able,

The soote mylk of hir brestis tweyne,

Most precious licour, who myhte therto atteyne: 1132

1100. exceden J.

1111. Calisthenes P.

1112. The] om. J.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 90 recto.

For bawme is non, the vertu weel declared,  
Of worldli richesse may be therto compared.

This precious pyment is youe vnto no foolis,  
Aboue all licours it doth so ferre excell,  
Whos origynall sprang in the hooli scoolis  
Of Athenys, as famous bookis tell;  
For of philosophie ther sprang out first þe well,  
Wher Calistenes, thexperience is kouth,  
With fulsum plente was fostred in his youth.

It is never  
given to  
dunces, and first  
1136 sprang from the  
schools of  
Athens, where  
Callisthenes  
was fostered.

Thouh he was bor[e]n of a good lynage,  
Vertu maad hym mor hih up for tascende,  
To been enhaunsed for noblesse of corage  
Moor than for blood[e], who can comprehend:  
For philisophres & clerkis mor commende  
The moral vertues entresoured be writyngis,  
Than al the tresours of worldli crowned kynges. 1148

Though born  
of good family,  
virtue saw that  
1144 he ascended  
even higher:

Of gentil stokkes rekne out the issues,  
That be descendid doun from a roial lyne:  
Yif þei be vicious & void of al vertues  
And ha[ue] no tarage of vertuuous disciplyne, 1152  
With temporal tresour thouh thei florshe & shyne,  
As for a tyme sitting on hih[e] stages,  
Withoute vertu thei ar but ded images.

for moral worth  
is greater than  
descent from  
royal line.

For thouh princis ha[ue] conquered be bataill  
This world in roundnesse bi ther cheualrie,  
What may ther tryumphes or noblesse auaille,  
Withoute that vertu be riht ther titles guye,  
To be compared vnto philosophie?  
For philisophres applie al ther ententis  
To knowe heuene & cours of elementis.

Though princes  
1156 conquer the  
world by battle,  
their triumphs  
avail little  
unless they are  
guided by  
virtue.

Thei sette no stoor of thynges transitorie,  
Nor of Fortunys expert doubilnesse;  
To heuenli thynges is set al ther memorie,  
How the seuene planetes in ther cours hem dresse,  
Meuyng of steris, sparklyng in ther brihtnesse,  
With reuoluciouns of the speeris nyne, 1168  
Moodres of musik, as auctours determyne.

Philosophers do  
not care for  
1164 transitory  
things, but turn  
to the seven  
planets, the  
mothers of  
music.

And in the noble tweyne famous housis  
Flouryng in Grece, richest of euerichon,  
Cald bi old date the faire trewe spousis

Athens and its  
Academy were  
the bright  
1172 lanterns of the  
world.

Of philisophres, many mo than oon,  
 In Achademye & in Athenys shon  
 The briht lanternis of most reuerencis,  
 This world tenlumyne bi liberall sciences. 1176

Callisthenes  
 studied in the  
 schools of  
 Socrates and  
 Plato, who held  
 the key of  
 secret mysteries  
 and of the  
 divine idea,  
 And among other this Calistenes  
 Was in his youthe put for to scoleie  
 In the too scooles of prudent Socrates  
 And of Plato, which that bar the keie 1180  
 Of secre mysteries & of dyvyn Ideie.  
 In which too scooles of gret habilité  
 Was non profitted halff so moch as he.

and had  
 all sciences  
 hidden within  
 their breasts.  
 These olde clerkis, these too philisophres 1184  
 Wer in tho daies for doctrine souereyne  
 Callid in this world the riche *precious* coffres  
 And tresoreris, that kepte the chestis tweyne  
 Amyd ther brestis, wheryn God ded ordeyne, 1188  
 Most cleer pocessioun put in ther depos,  
 Of alle sciences vnder a keye cloos.

He was  
 also a pupil of  
 Aristotle, who  
 chose him to  
 attend  
 Alexander,  
 This Calistenes, scoleer & auditour  
 Of Aristotiles, bi kunnyng conqueryng 1192  
 The noble *gemme* & the most *precious* flour  
 Of philosophie, al flour[*e*]s surmountyng,  
 Wherthoruh he was chose in his lyuyng,  
 As his maister list for hym prouide, 1196  
 On Alisandre tawaiten & abide.

when Alexander  
 asked him to  
 send him a  
 philosopher to  
 magnify his  
 conquests by  
 good counsel,  
 to record his  
 triumphs,  
 For Alisaundre, of kynges most enteere  
 And most worthi, to speke of hih prowesse,  
 Dede Aristotiles humbeli requere, 1200  
 To prouide & doon his bisynesse  
 Bi expert knowyng & aussynesse  
 To sende hym oon, which of philosophie  
 Mihte bi good counsail his conquest magnefie. 1204

and to direct  
 him in moral  
 virtue.  
 To write also his tryumphes digne of glorie [p. 223]  
 And to remembre his actis marciall,  
 Put his palmys of knihthod in memorie,  
 And to directen in especiall 1208  
 His roial noblesse in vertu morall,  
 That non errour be sey[*e*]n heer nor there  
 In hym that sholde al the world conquere.

1178. for] forth H, R 3 — scoleys H. 1180. keys H.

1181. Ideies H.

1210. be] wer H. 1211. the] this H.

But it fill so of knihtli auenture,  
That of Fortunis hih promocioun,  
That he bi armys proudli gan recure  
Of Perse and Mede the myhti regioun,  
Brouhte kyng Darie onto subieccioun,  
Gat hool his tresour, that no man myhte expresse  
Tacounte the noumbre of his gret richesse.

1212 But after his  
conquest of the  
Medes and  
Persians,

Which vnseur tresour & slidyng habundaunce,  
With wastyng shadwes of godis transitorie,  
In surquedous pride gan so his herte auauunce  
Bi fals ambicioun & outraious veynglorie,  
That made hym lese mynde & eek memorie,  
To knowe of nature he was no man mortall,  
But lik to goddis that wer celestiall.

1216

1220 Alexander grew  
proud, and,  
no longer  
considering  
himself a mortal  
man,

Above the palme of old[e] conquerours,  
Knihtli tryumphes, conquestis marcial,  
He vsurped be tittle of his labours  
To heuenli goddis for to been egal.  
And thoruh his merites most imperiall,  
He gan presume be lyne he was allied  
With the seuene goddis for to be deified.

1224

1228 aspired to be an  
equal of the  
seven gods of  
heaven and  
presumed to be  
deified.

Thoruh al his paleis & his roial halle  
A lawe he sette, upon peyne of lyff,  
That men of custum sholde hym name & calle  
This worldis\* monarke, nat mortal nor passiff,  
Sone to Iubiter for a prerogatyff,  
Which hadde the erthe, as god most of puissaunce,  
Conquered bi swerd onto his obeissaunce.

1232

He ordained  
that men should  
call him the  
son of Jupiter,

Bi ful auys purposed for the nonys,  
Of pompous outrage & surquedous entente,  
Ful gret tresor of gold & precious stonis  
Vnto the temple of Iubiter he sente,  
That the bisshoppis & preestis sholde assente  
Hym to resceyue at his hom komyng  
Lik as a god, & lik no mortal kyng.

1236

1240 and bribed the  
priests to  
receiue him as  
a god.

Thus bextort dreed & bi vsurpid myht  
Was first brouht in foul idolatrie,  
Causyng pryncis to resceyue ageyn riht  
Godli reuerence of froward maumetrie.  
But whan Calistenes this errour dede espie

1244

1248 Thus idolatry  
originated.  
But when  
Callisthenes  
saw Alexander's  
error, he  
endeavored to  
correct it.

1221. auauunce] enhance H, enhance R 3, H 5.

1222. outraious] contagious H.

1236. Theȝ wordis H — wordlis B. 1246. kyng] thyng H, P.



- In Alisaundre, he bisili dide entende 1252  
 This fals oppynyoun to correcte & amende.
- Five proofs he gave him that he was only a mortal man:  
 Bi fyue causes, notable to reherse,  
 This Calistenes in especial,  
 Thouh he was kyng of Egipt, Mede & Perse, 1256  
 He preued of resoun he was a man mortall,  
 His berthe eek erthli & nat celestially,  
 Fader, mooder as of ther natures  
 Born for to deie lik other creatures. 1260
- His father and mother were worldly folk and in no respect celestial, and both of them had died.  
 His fader Phelipp, of Macedoyne kyng,  
 His mooder callid Olympiades,  
 Worldli folk & heuenli [in] no thyng,  
 With kyngis, queenis upset bi hih encres. 1264  
 Yit ageyn deth thei koude ha[ue] no reles,  
 Lawes of nature maugre ther will tobeie,  
 Nat lik goddis, but onli born to deie.
- They were subject to various passions and infirmities, and nothing deified them on earth but flattery and dread.  
 Kynde made hem subiect to sundri passiouns 1268  
 And many vnkouth dyuers infirmytes,  
 Now glad, now heuy of condiciouns,  
 Folwyng the fourme of ther humanytes.  
 But of ther false vsurpede dietes, 1272  
 I can nat seyn, sauff dreed & flat[e]rie  
 Wrongli in erthe dede hem deifie.
- Alexander himself, for all his power, suffered the passions of health and sickness.  
 Eek Alisaundre folwyng eucere his lust,  
 For al his lordshepe & his gret[e] myht, 1276  
 He suffred passiouns of hunger & of thrust,  
 Now hool, now sik, now heuy and, now liht.  
 Whos entrechaungyng in euery mannys siht  
 Cleerli shewed, cleerkis reherse kan, 1280  
 He was no god, but lik a mortal man.
- Once he became very ill from bathing in the Nile when over-heated and nearly died,  
 It fill onys, myn auctour doth compile,  
 In a gret heete, long or he was old,  
 He bathed hymself[e] in the flood of Nile, 1284  
 Wher of fortune he sodenli took cold:  
 His pooris opnede on parties manyfold,  
 Lay long aftir, his story berth witnesse,  
 Or he was curid of that gret seeknesse. 1288
- and when finally he recovered, it was through medicine and not divine power.  
 But at the laste, bi craft of medecyne [p. 224]  
 Delyuered he was of that infirmyte,  
 Nothyng amendid bi his power dyuyne,  
 Bi myht of Iuno nor Iubiteres pouste, 1292

Nor bi his owne vsurpid deite:  
 For bi the passiouns which he dede endure,  
 It shewed he was a dedli creature.

Off hym also it is maad menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 He hadde in custum to falle in dronkenesse,  
 Thoruh vinolence loste ofte his resoun;  
 Than of ire and furious hastynesse  
 He wolde smyte & hurte in his woodnesse.  
 Which toknys wern, pleyntli to termyne,  
 In his persone nat heuenli nor dyuyne.

Whan the philisophre callid Calistenes  
 Gan first considre al thes condiciouns  
 In Alisandre, he put hymself in pres,  
 Void of dissymulyng or long\* dilaciouns,  
 For to reffourme such fals ambiciouns  
 Of godly honours,\* which men dede on hym feyne,<sup>1308</sup>  
 And from all vices his corage to restreyn.

In this purpos as eny centre stable,  
 He cast hym fulli of trewe entencioun  
 To correcte al that was repreuable  
 Vsid in his persone or in his regeoun.  
 Trouthe gaff hym herte lik a champioun,  
 To telle the kyng in his estat roial,  
 He was no god, but as a man mortal.

For which the kyng of indignacioun  
 Kauhte a quarel ageyn Calistenes,  
 Put upon hym vnjustli fals tresoun,  
 Onli to slen his maister causeles.  
 And for tateynte hym, affor[n] al the pres  
 Saide how he hadde of his iniquite  
 Conspired ageyn his roial mageste.

And feyned also, the silue same tyme,  
 How he had maad a conspiracioun  
 Ageyn his lord, bi an horrible cryme  
 Interuptyng the relegioun  
 Of his dyuyne institucioun;  
 That in such caas, ther was no bettir reed,  
 But Calistenes bi lawe mut be ded.

1296 He also had a  
 habit of getting  
 drunk and  
 acting like a  
 madman, which  
 was hardly a  
 proof of  
 divinity.

1300

1304 Callisthenes  
 told Alexander  
 all these things  
 without fear or  
 dissembling.

1312 Truth gave  
 him the heart  
 of a champion.

1316

1320 But the king  
 became so  
 angry, that he  
 openly accused  
 Callisthenes of  
 conspiring to  
 slay him,

1324 and also said  
 very untruth-  
 fully that Callis-  
 thenes had  
 interfered with  
 the religion  
 which he had  
 divinely  
 1328 instituted, and  
 therefore  
 must die.

1298. vinolence] violence H — ofte] offtene H.

1306. or long] & B.

1308. godly honours] goodli honour B, J, godly honour P.

1316. as] om. H, P, H 5.

1321. for] om. H. 1324. And] om. H.

They hewed off  
his hands and  
feet and tore out  
his eyes

And to prolonge of his deth the peyne,  
Vpon a boord he was leid along,  
His feet smet of & his hondes tweyne,  
His eyen rent out: wer nat his peynes strong?  
Thus kan tirauntes, whan them list do wrong,  
Slen philisophres withoutyn any routhe,  
Which spared nat for to seyn hem trouthe.

1332

1336

and cut off his  
lips and nostrils,  
and exhibited  
his mutilated  
body to the  
army.

This cruel vengauce mihte nat suffise;  
But Alisaundre, mor tencrece his wo,  
Dede kutte his lippis in ful cruel wise,  
His nose-thrillis, his eres eek also.  
And with the bodi he badde men sholde go  
Toforn his host[e], as it is remembrid,  
To shewe the trunke, how it was dismembrid.

1340

1344

After that, he  
was thrown into  
a dark cave  
filled with  
madly barking  
dogs.

In a caue, deep & wonder lowe,  
Solitarie, dirked al the boundis,  
Aftir the[s] peynes he made hym to be throwe,  
The place stuffid with wood berkyng houndis,  
Of fals entent to reende his bloodi woundis.  
Til Lysymachus, of gret compassioun,  
To shorte his torment gaf [to] hym poison.

1348

Finally  
Lysimachus  
compassionately  
gave him poison  
to shorten his  
agony.  
Alexander, you  
ought to be  
ashamed of  
yourself!

Who radde euer of tormentis more\* terrible!  
O Alisaundre, thou ouhtest been ashamed  
To slen thi clerk with peynes so horrible,  
For thi viciis because he hath the blamyd!  
Thi roial name therbi is diffamyd.  
But euer tirauntes, whan them list be wood,  
Of innocentis reioisshe to sheede [the] blood.

1352

1356

But far from  
being ashamed,  
he was so  
furious with  
Lysimachus that  
he shut him  
up with a fierce  
lion.

Ageyn this kniht, gentil Lysymachus,  
Because he hadde of hym compassioun,  
Kyng Alisaundre was malencolious.  
Withoute cause, title or offensioun  
Leet shet[e] hym up with a fers leoun,  
Void of al helpe for to be socourid,  
Of entencioun he sholde be deuoured.

1360

1364

However,  
Lysimachus  
ran at the lion  
like a knight  
and rent out  
his tongue,  
which brave  
deed restored  
him to  
Alexander's  
favour.

But Lysymachus quit hym lik a kniht  
Ageyn this leoun in the same place.  
Ran fersli on hym, & of his marcial myht  
Out of his hed his\* tunge he dede arace.  
Reconciled to the kynges grace,

1368

1331. to] om. H. 1351. to] om. J, P — to hym gaf H.  
1352. more] most B. 1362. offensioun] affeccioun H.  
1369. his] the B.

Because that he so knihtli hath hym born,  
Bettir cherissed than euer he was beforne.

1372

Another kniht, that callid was Clitus,  
Famous in armys for his cheualrie,  
On the grettest of the kyngis hous,  
And most comendid of prudent policie,  
Most famyler, as bookis specefie,  
Aboute the kyng, as it was ofte preued,  
To tempre his corage whan he was agreeved, —

[p. 225] Another knight  
named Clytus,  
who was a great  
friend of the  
king,

1376

The kyng & he walkyng hond be hond  
Withynne the paleis, beyng in presence  
Princis, dukis of many dyuers lond,  
Wher thei began be notable elloquence  
Remembre of armys the marciall\* excellence  
Of conquerours & worthi knihtis olde;  
And eueri man aboute his tale tolde.

1380 once praised  
Philip so  
highly in  
Alexander's  
presence, that  
Alexander, in  
his envy,

1384

Among[e] which Clitus, that gentil kniht,  
Gan to comende & gretli magnefie  
Phelipp Macedoyne, as hym ouhte of riht,  
Bothe of [his] wisdam & his cheualrie.  
Til Alisaundre hadde therat envie,  
Gan disdeyne of furious cruelte  
That any sholde be comendid mor than he.

1388

Cauhte occasioun of ire & fals hatreede  
Ageyn [t]his kniht, that was to hym most trewe,  
With a sharp swerd vnwarli made hym bleede,  
His herte blood, hoot & red of hewe,  
Bi his sides railyng doun of newe, —  
Therbi to preue, this stori telle can,  
He was no god nor resonable man.

1396 cut him down  
with his sword  
and killed him,  
which proved  
that, far from  
being a god, he  
was not even  
a reasonable  
man.

1400

Thus in pryncis furious & cruell  
Men may cleerli an euidence see,  
How ther lordshipe is nat perpetuell,  
But ful of chaung & mutabilite:  
Of cheer now freendli, now sodeyn enmyte;  
Record on Clitus, most in the kyngis grace,  
Vnwarli slayn, & dede no trespase.

1404

1372. beforne] ageyn toforne H.

1375. On] oon of H.

1378. as] om. H.

1384. marciall] notable B, J.

1393. That] ban H.

1399. this] his H, R 3.



Alexander, who  
slew his friends  
in outrageous  
fits of anger,  
was certainly  
not worthy to  
be deified.

Was he worthi to be deified, 1408  
This Alisandre, most double of his corage?  
Or was he worthi to be stelled, 1412  
This furious prince for his fel outrage,  
That slouh his freendis in his mortal rage?  
Thus far[e]n tirauntis whan them list be wood,  
To seeke occasioun for to sheede blood.

He who trusts  
tyrants shall  
soonest be  
deceived.

Calisten slayn for moral disciplyne, 1416  
And Lysymachus for his compassioun!  
Eek this tiraunt of fals gredi rauyne  
Slouh gentil Clitus ageyn trouthe & resoun,  
As ye han herd, for comendacioun  
Of kyng Phelipp, this stori weel conceyued, — 1420  
Who trusteth tirauntis shal sonnest be deceyued!

### Lenvoye.

This tragedy  
tells about  
Callisthenes,  
who was slain  
by Alexander

THIS tragedie off Calistenes  
Declareth vs be notable remembraunce,  
He was with Plato & old Socrates 1424  
In his youthe put vnder gouernaunce,  
Drank of the mylk bi plenteuous habundaunce  
Of ther too scooles, euer deuoid of slouthe,  
Last bi Alisaundre dismembrid for his trouthe. 1428

because he said  
the truth.

First he was sent bi Aristotiles  
For tawaite bi prudent purueyaunce  
On Alisandre, list he wer rek[el]les, -  
Bi presumpcioun in his roial puissaunce 1432  
To take upon hym godly\* attendaunce,  
Which he withstood; alas, it was gret routhe,  
To be so slayn because he seide trouthe!

Those who live  
with tyrants  
must be able  
to flatter and  
lie and be  
deceitful of  
heart.

Who with tirauntis list put hymself in pres, 1436  
To haue ther fauour & stormy aqueyntaunce,  
He mut kunne\* flatre & fage dout[el]les,  
Be double of herte, with feyned contenaunce,  
With cheer contreued doon his obseruaunce: 1440  
For feithful menyng slayn, & þat was routhe,  
Is\* Calistenes because he seide trouthe.

1433. goodli B, J, goodly R 3, P.

1436. list] om. H.

1438. kunne] kum B, come H, P.

1442. Is] In B.

Noble Pryncis, your subiectis keepe in pes,  
 Beth nat to hasti for to do vengauce;  
 For to tirauntes that be merciles  
 God sent short lyff & sodenli myschaunce.  
 Who seith [you] trouthe, hath no displesaunce,  
 Preente in your herte, how it was gret routhē  
 That Calistenes was slay[e]n for his trouthe.

1444 Noble Princes,  
 be not too  
 hasty to do  
 vengeance, for  
 God grants  
 short life to  
 tyrants.

1448

[How Alisaundre kyng of Pirothe auenturyng to  
 passe the flood of Acheronte, there at his bak/  
 bi his most trusty was dedly wounded.]<sup>1</sup>

AFFTIR the compleynt of Calistenes,  
 Slayn tirauntli & dede no trēspas,  
 Cam Alisaundre kyng of Pirothes,  
 His woundis bleedyng, onto Iohn Bochas,  
 To hym declaryng\* how he drowned was  
 In Acheronte, a ryuer of gret fame,  
 Beside a toun, Pandosia was the name.

1452 Alexander, king  
 of Epirus, next  
 appeared before  
 Bochas, telling  
 him how he  
 was drowned  
 in the Acheron,

1456

And as it is remembred & Itold  
 Of this notable myhti strong cite,  
 It was in Grece bilt be daies olde,  
 And aftir Pirrus callid Pirothe,  
 Wher-as the kyng heeld his roial see.  
 And as Bochas also doth\* determyne,  
 This Alisaundre cam of the same lyne.

[p. 226] near the city  
 of Pandosia,  
 that was built  
 long ago.

1460

Of whos kynreede is maad pleyn mencion,  
 Sone to Achilles was this knyht\* Pirrus;  
 And next in ordre bi successioun,  
 Fader to Alisaundre was Neptolomius,  
 Which hadde also, myn auctour tellith thus,  
 A ful fair douhtir, the story ye may seen,  
 Olympiades, of Macedoyne queen.

1464 Pyrrhus was son  
 of Achilles; and  
 Neoptolemus,  
 next in order,  
 was the father  
 of this  
 Alexander and  
 of Olympias,  
 queen of  
 Macedon,

1468

And she was weddid to Phelipp Macedo,  
 Whilom mooder, this queen of most renoun,  
 To Alisaundre, the stori tellith so,

1472 who married  
 Philip and  
 became mother  
 of Alexander  
 the Great.

1446. sodenli] sodeyn J, R 3, H 5, sodeine P. 1447. you] om. J.

1454. declaryng] declared B, J, P.

1460. callid] cam H.

1462. as] om. H, R 3, H 5 — Bochas also doth] bookis also  
 B, J, P.

1465. this] the J — knyht] kyng B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 9r verso.

Which al the world brouht in subieccioun.  
Whos fader Phelipp, of gret affeccioun,  
Leet crowne the brother of Olympiades, 1476  
Callid Alisaundre, to regne in Pirothes.

Alexander of  
Epirus was  
made king by  
Philip, who used  
him against  
nature,

To whom [kyng] Phelipp, for his gret beute,  
Because he was so fair a creature,  
Hadde such affeccioun & specialte, 1480  
As it is remembred in scripture,  
Of fals foul lust ageyn[e]s [al] nature,  
As seith Bochas, I can hym nat excuse,  
Vnleeffulli he dede his beute vse. 1484

which was a  
horrible deed,  
and too foul to  
write about.

And bi mene of that horrible deede,  
Which to reherse is to foul a thyng,  
This said[e] Phelipp, in Bochas thus I reede,  
In Epirothes he made hym to be kyng; 1488  
And of extorsioun, be record of writyng,  
Causeles fro thens he dede enchace  
The kyng Arabba, tho regnyng in that place.

Afterwards  
Alexander  
invaded Italy,

And it fill aftir, the stori tellith so, 1492  
Of this Alisaundre, be cerious rehersaille,  
Vpon the deth of Phelipp Macedo,  
With a gret host [he] cam into Itaille,  
Supposyng gretli for to auaille 1496  
To occupie, aftir his proude entent,  
Hooli the boundis of al the occident.

where Fortuna  
deceived him  
by first giving  
him victory  
over the people  
of Lucca.

And thouh so be that Fortune be chaungable,  
Double also, bi cours of hir nature, 1500  
At his gynnyng he fond hir fauourable:  
Made hym twies proudli to recure  
Geyn them of Luk, to ther disconfiture  
To haue the feeld, & maugre al ther myht 1504  
Of verray force to putte hem vnto fliht.

When he began  
this war in  
Italy,

Ageyn Itaille whan he gan this werre,  
Fulli in purpos the Romeyns to assaille,  
Of hih presumpcioun proceede he gan so ferre, 1508  
With many prince that was in his bataille,  
To knowe afforn bi certeyn dyuynaille,  
Of his conquest the boundis for to caste,  
And of his lyff how longe it sholde laste. 1512

1478. kyng] *om.* J. 1482. al] *om.* P, J.  
1488. Epirus P. 1491. Arribba H.  
1493. cerious] Curious H. 1495. he] *om.* J, P.  
1504. &] *om.* H.

And in the temple of Iubiter the grete,  
 Bi dyuynours that wer expert & old,  
 Seruyng this god withynne the lond of Creete,  
 This was the ansuere which thei haue hym told, 1516  
 And it affermyd bi toknis manyfold,  
 How that he nat sholde eschewe þe dreedful date  
 Ouer the day assigned to his last fate.

he inquired his  
 fate of diviners,  
 who said that  
 he should

And thei also assigned[e] a place,  
 Therbi to haue knowlechyng mor cleer,  
 Vnder a cite, longe & large of space,  
 Callid Pandosia; & for to go mor neer,  
 Bi Acheronte, a famous gret ryueer;  
 Told hym pleyntli, & koude no ferther seie,  
 Of necessite ther he muste [nedis] deie.

1520 die near a city  
 called Pandosia,  
 on the Acheron.

And thouh it wer an earnest & no iape,  
 Of God ordeyned nat to be set a-side,  
 He thouhte of wisdam his destyne tescap  
 And othirwise for hymself provide.  
 Cast in Grece no lenger to abide,  
 Wenying this ryuer nor that fair cite,  
 Sauf in Grece sholde nowher ellis be.

1524

1528 He thought to  
 escape his  
 destiny by  
 leaving Grece,  
 where there  
 was such a  
 town and  
 river.

And for to sette hymself in assuraunce  
 Of entent tescawe his destyne,  
 In-to thre batailes departyng his puissaunce,  
 Cam to Itaille tofor Luk the cite.  
 Thei with helpe of Sammoys the contre,  
 With a gret poweer cam out anon riht,  
 Slouh al his knihtis & put hym vnto fliht.

1532

1536 Later on he  
 was defeated  
 by the Luccans,  
 and his knights  
 slain; and,

At the bak thei pursued hym so neer,  
 That his enmyes almost wer on hym fall,  
 Vn-tabregge, broke with the ryuer,  
 And ouerturnid with his plankis all.  
 And Acheronte men that ryuer call,  
 As was told hym bi a certeyn kniht  
 Which rood before hym, the ryuer in his siht.

1540

[p. 227<sup>1</sup>] closely pursued  
 by his  
 enemies, he  
 came to a  
 broken bridge  
 over a river;

1544

1516. the] his H.

1518. nat sholde] shuld not R 3, H 3.

1522. large &amp; long H.

1526. ther] þat H — nedis] om. H 5.

1539. out] om. H.

1542. wer almost H.

<sup>1</sup> In B, upper corner of leaf, later hand: "my Fate butt mene |  
 and yett contentt | k k t."



and when a  
certain knight  
told him that  
the river was  
the Acheron,  
and the  
town on its  
bank  
Pandusia,

For bi a reyn that fill that same niht,  
The ryuer wex[e] to a dreedful flood,  
And nat fer then[ne]s, in the kyngis siht,  
Vpon the water a litil toun ther stood,  
Which made the kyng chaunge face & blood; 1548  
And specialli his pride gan attame,  
Whan he wiste Pandusia was the name.

he remembered  
the diuinal  
of the priests  
and trembled  
in every joint  
for fear.

And thanne he gan most dreedfulli remembre,  
Callyng to mynde the preestis dyuynaille, 1556  
Which made hym quake in eueri ioynt & membre  
For verray feer[e], & his breth to faille.  
No man koude hym wisse\* nor counsaile,  
On eueri parti he stood so on the wrak: 1560  
The flood toform hym, his enmyes at his\* bak.

He did not  
know which  
way to turn,  
with his foes  
close behind  
him, and the  
river before him.

To take the ryuer he stood in mortal dreed;  
And yif that he his enmyes dede abide,  
He wiste weel that he was but ded, 1564  
Passage was non for to turne aside.  
Thus desolat he stood withoute guide,  
Thouhte it bett to iuparte the ryuer  
Than with enmyes that folwed hym so neer. 1568

and finally  
choosing the  
river as the  
lesser evil,

Thre mortal dreedis his herte gan constreyn;e  
Dreed of the flood[e] for to ha[ue] passage,  
Behynde his enmyes, that gan at hym disdeyne,  
List he wer slay[e]n in that mortal rage: 1572  
His fate approchyng, he but yong of age,  
The toun Pandusia the toknys ded expresse,  
With Acheronte that bar therof wînesse.

he was about  
to throw  
himself into its  
waters, when  
his most  
trusted man  
plunged a great  
spear into his  
back and  
killed him.

And whan that he putte in auenture 1576  
To passe the flood or ellis to be ded,  
Whom he most truste of any creature,  
Took a gret spere, squar & sharp the hed,  
And at his bak, he quakyng in his dreed, 1580  
Traitourli thoruhout[e] plate & maile  
Perced his herte; the blood abroad gan raile.

The Luccans  
cut his body  
into pieces, and  
afterwards an  
old lady begged  
that

And as it is also of hym remembred,  
The Lucaynois be vengable violence, 1584  
Thei han his careyn on pecis al dismembred, —

1551. water] Riveer H. 1559. hym wisse] wissh hym B,  
wisse hym H, R 3. 1561. 2nd his] the B — at his] atte J.  
1568. with] with his H. 1569. dreedis] Deedis H.  
1578. trustid H. 1581. Trayterously P.  
1582. the blood abroad] about þe bloode H, R 3.

Til an old ladi beyng in presence  
 Requered them of humble pacience,  
 That she of grace gadre myhte anon  
 His membris alle & ioyne hem into oon,

1588

Afftir to sende hem onto his suster deere,  
 Olympiades, the statli grete queen;  
 That of affecciou<sup>n</sup> & loue most enteere,  
 Whan it befell that she dede hem seen,  
 Sholde of nature, as it mut needis been,  
 Weepe, & prouide in his estat roiall  
 To burie the bodi with feeste funerall.

1596

she might  
 send what  
 remained of  
 him to his dear  
 1592 sister  
 Olympias  
 for burial.

Seeth heer exa<sup>m</sup>ple of this proude kyng  
 Which wolde ha scaped his fatal destyne;  
 Chaung of placis auailed hym nothyng:  
 Parodie of pryncis may nat chaunged be,  
 The terme sette, fro which thei may nat flee.  
 For whan heuene of deth hath set a date,  
 No mortal man eschewe may\* his fate.

1600

Thus this  
 proud king  
 thought to  
 avoid his  
 destiny; but  
 change of places  
 1600 auailed him  
 nothing, for no  
 man can escape  
 his fate.

[How Darye kyng of Perce and Mede was outraied  
 by Alisaundre kyng of Macedoyne.] <sup>1</sup>

**O**N Alisaundre callid Epirothes  
 Me list as now no lenger for to tarye, —  
 Slayn at myscheef, for he was rek[e]lles,  
 Double of corage, koude chaunge & varie.  
 For turne I will my penne to kyng Darie,  
 Which that whilom, who-so list take heede,  
 Most myhti regned in Perse & Mede.

1604 King Darius III

And among other notable werreious,  
 Lik as I deeme, bi heuenli influence,  
 Onli be title of his predecessours  
 And thoruh his prudent roial excellence,  
 To gret encre<sup>s</sup> of his magnificence  
 He had al Asie, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 Vnder his lordshepe & domynaciou<sup>n</sup>.

1612

had all Asia  
 under his  
 lordship,

And as myn auctour Bochas doth diffyne,  
 He was descendid fro the imperial blood  
 Of Artaxerses, & born eek of that lyne.

1616

1620

and, as Bochas  
 says, was super-  
 latively rich  
 and descended  
 from the  
 imperial line  
 of Artaxerxes.

1589. into] in till H. 1595. his] hir H, R 3.  
 1603. may eschewe B, J, P. 1604. On] In H, R 3, J.  
 1608. to] vn to H, R 3. 1618. Bochas] om. H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 92 verso.

Passed al princis of tresour & of good;  
 In Perse & Mede his gret empire stood.  
 An hundred prouynces, tencrece his\* puissaunce,  
 And seuene & thretti he hadde in gouernaunce. 1624

He had power  
 over Egypt and  
 the Red Sea,  
 and deemed  
 himself lord  
 of all  
 earthly wealth.

Ouer al Asie towar[d] the orient [p. 228]  
 His lordshipe laste, bookis make mynde,  
 And [he] hadde toward thoxident,  
 Ouer Egipt poweer, as I fynde, 1628  
 The Rede Se was nat left behynde,  
 Deemyng hymself, of al erthli treso[u]r,  
 Was non but he lord nor gouernour.

His dominions  
 extended over  
 India, Parthia  
 and Armenia,  
 and worldly  
 folk thought  
 him the equal  
 of God.

Toward Septemptrion, vnder the mydday speere 1632  
 His poweer rauhte & his regalie,  
 Ouer Ynde, in cronicles ye may lere,  
 And to the boundis of gret Armenye;  
 Lord of the kyngdam that callid is Parthie. 1636  
 Worldli folk dempte hym with God egall,  
 Maister to Fortune, & she nat but his thrall.

But for all his  
 wealth and  
 ambition,  
 Fortune assailed  
 him through  
 Alexander the  
 Great,

But in his hiest exaltacioun  
 Of worldli glorie, he coude nat preuaille; 1640  
 For al his richesse & veyn ambicioun,  
 But Fortune durste hym weel assaille.  
 In his most riche roial apparaille,  
 Cast in hir chaungis to yiue hym a sharp shour 1644  
 Bi Alisaundre, of Grece enheritour.

and cast  
 him down from  
 his throne.

Vnto purpos I will my penne dresse  
 For to declare & make mencion,  
 How proud[e] Darie in his most noblesse 1648  
 Was bi Fortune from his see cast down.  
 For anon aftir the coronacioun  
 Of Alisaundre in Macedoyne kyng,  
 This was the processe anon of his werkyng: 1652

Alexander made  
 no delay, but  
 set out at once  
 to conquer  
 Persia and  
 Media,

He nat delaied nor maad no longe date,  
 In purpos fulli of ire to proceede  
 Off Perse & Mede the sceptris to translate,  
 Al ther richessis to conquere & posseede, 1656  
 Perpetueli for tabide in deede  
 Vndir Grekis myhti obeissaunce,  
 In Macedoyne to haue gouernaunce.

1623. his] of B.

1627. he] om. H, R 3, J, P, H 5. 1635. Armonye H

1643. riche] om. H. 1655. sceptre H.

- And as myn auctour weel reherse kan,  
 He sette in Grece the myhti strong cite,  
 Of Corynthe the metropolitan,  
 Ther testablishe his imperial see,  
*In regalibus* whan he list crowned bee,  
 As man whom God list of his myht to marke  
 The world to conquere, & be therof monarke.
- At the gynnyng of his conquest famous,  
 Throuhout Grece in euery regeoun  
 First he ches out of his fadres hous  
 Knihtis that wern most souereyn of renoun,  
 Notable in armys, & of condicioun  
 Feithful, trewe, which had of hih prudence  
 Forsiht in armys of marcial prouidence.
- To them he dede ful notabli assigne,  
 As men expert in knihtli apparailles,  
 To make his stuff with many riche signe,  
 And forge of steel his plate & his mailles.  
 Gaff hem the reule to gouerne his\* batailles;  
 For prouidence, of yore it hath be told,  
 Ful myche auailleth of knihtes wis & old.
- Al this acomplissed, he list no lenger tarie,  
 This worthi kyng, but with his ordenaunce  
 Purposed to begynne on kyng Darie.  
 And, as it is put in remembraunce,  
 In most proud wise he gan hymself auaunce,  
 First in his weie to brenne & bete doun  
 Of hasti ire Thebes the myhti toun.
- Aftir, he gat too mihti regeouns,  
 The ton of Frige, the tothir callid Lide, —  
 Set bi old tyme wer ther fundaciouns  
 Vpon too ryuers rennyng ther beside,  
 Whos goldene grauell ther brihtnesse may nat hide.  
 Paceolus & Eryne men them call,  
 Richest off stremys, thouth men rekne hem all.

1660 and establishing  
his seat in  
Corinth

1664

1668 and choosing  
out the most  
renowned and  
loyal knights of  
Greece,

1672

1676 gave them full  
charge of his  
military  
preparations.

1680

1684 When all was  
ready, he set  
out against  
Darius, destroy-  
ing Thebes on  
his way

1688 and conquering  
Phrygia and  
Lydia.

1691

1667. Atte begynnyng H.  
 1675. apparaile H.  
 1676. many a H.  
 1677. of] be H — maile H.  
 1678. his] the B — bataile H.  
 1683. kyng] om. H, R 3.  
 1692. grauelis J, grauels P — may] myht H.  
 1693. Pactolus P.



After win-  
ning Isauria and  
Pamphilia,

And of his conquest ferther to termyne,  
He wan Isaurea, a prouynce wonder strong, 1696  
In Asia oon cheuest off the nyne.

And Pamphile, a kyngdam large and long,  
He gat also, wher it wer riht or wrong.  
For wher that conquest haue any title of riht, 1700  
It passeth my resoun, my kunnyng & my myht.

he hastened to  
Persia.

I took no parti nor me list nat tarie  
In this mateer, but for[th] I wil proceede,  
How Alisaundre hastid toward Darie 1704  
Tacheue his conquest of Perse & eek of Mede.  
But first he cam to Frigia, I reede,  
Into a\* cite, the name to specefie,  
Thilke daies it callid was Gordie. 1708

Arriving at  
Gordium in  
Phrygia, he  
found a rich  
cart bound  
with ropes in  
the temple of  
Jupiter;

Aftir myn auctour afferme weel I dar, [p. 229]  
Ther was a temple in Frigia, thus seith he,  
Of Iubiter, in which ther stood a chaar  
With ropis bounde, of stonis & perre;\* 1712  
Among[es] which men myhte behold & see  
A fatal knotte, be craff[t] maad so sotile,  
That no man koude ondon it be no wile.

and it was  
said that  
whoever could  
untie the knot  
should be  
crowned king  
over Asia.

For who that hadde science or kunnyng 1716  
That corious knotte to losne or vntwyne,  
Ouer Asie he sholde be crownid kyng.  
And Alisaundre, as bookis determyne,  
Seyng this char knot with many [a] lyne, 1720  
And how it sempte a maner impossible  
To seueren it, which was indyuysible, —

Alexander saw  
that the cords  
were so inter-  
laced that no  
man could  
loosen them, so  
he pulled out  
his sword

The chaar with coordis was so enterlacid,  
That richeli stood in Iouys tabernacle, 1724  
Which be his wit koude nat be vnbracid,  
Nother be crafft nor no soleyn myracle:  
Til Alisaundre, bi a dyuyn oracle,  
Drouh out his suerd, wherof men hadde wonder, 1728  
Carf the knotte & cordis alle assonder,

and cut the knot  
through, and  
rode forth on  
his conquest.

Wherbi he wiste that he was ordeyned  
Ouer al Asie to be lord & kyng.  
Which to reioisshe (this stori is nat feyned) 1732

1698. Pamphilia P. 1699. wer] was H. 1705. to cheve H.  
1707. In ta B, J, R 3. 1708. callid] namyd H.  
1712. of perre B. 1720. a] om. J, H 5, P.  
1729. Carf] korve H. 1730. he] thei H, H 5, R 3.

He rood lik Mars his batailes conueyeng,  
 Thoruh Perse & Mede his standardis displaieng,  
 Toward his conquest, wher I leue hym duelle,  
 And of this chaar & knottes I wil telle.

1736

Prudent Iustinus, an olde cronicler,  
 In his cronicles reherseth this storye:  
 How [oon] Gordius, a poore laborer,  
 Beside the cite that callid is Gordie,  
 Eryng his lond dede his oxis guie,  
 Al maner foul that hath weengis fliht  
 Hih in the hair apperede in his siht.

Justin tells as  
 that Gordius, a  
 poor agricul-  
 turist, once saw  
 all manner of  
 birds flying  
 high in the air.

1740

Vnknowe to hym the tokne what it mente,  
 With dyuynour[es] cast hym to counsaile,  
 Callid augures, which hooli ther entente,  
 Knowyng the processe of such dyuynaille,  
 Wher it shal proffite or disauaille.

1744

As he did not  
 know what the  
 token meant,  
 he went to  
 Gordium to  
 consult the  
 augurs, and met  
 at the city gate

And at the gate of Gordie the cite  
 He mette a maide excellyng of beute,

1748

a beautiful  
 girl, who  
 had fore-  
 knowledge of  
 events, and told  
 him that he  
 was to be  
 lord of all  
 Asia, and,  
 hoping to  
 become queen,  
 married him.

Which from aboue, bi heuenli influence,  
 Hadde of hir birthe a maner know[le]chyng,  
 In such augurie gret practik and science, —  
 Which to Gordius expowned eueri thyng,  
 Saide of Asia he sholde be lord & kyng,  
 And regne ther duryng al his lyff.  
 In hope wherof she becam his wyff.

1752

1756

After his weddyng he wex fortunat,  
 The cronicle can ber me weel record:  
 Ther fill in Frige a sodeyn gret debat  
 Among the comouns & a mortal discord,  
 Knowyng no mene to brynge hem at accord,  
 Til ther goddis bi notable prouidence  
 Tauht hem a weie tappese ther violence,

After the  
 wedding a  
 dispute arose in  
 Phrygia, and  
 the people were  
 told that it  
 would continue  
 until they had  
 chosen a king;  
 and it was  
 shewn to them  
 by miracle

1760

1764

How that debat sholde among hem laste  
 Vnto the tyme thei hadde chose a kyng.  
 And thei gan crie & preye ther goddis faste,  
 Bi sum signe or myracle out shewyng,  
 To yiue to them a maner knowlechyng,  
 That thei myhte, to ther notable encres,  
 Chese such on that sholde hem sette in pes.

1768

1733. bataille H.

1738. this] his H.

1758. his] this H.

1739. oon] om. J.

1769. to] om. H.

1746. ther] be H.

- that they must  
crown a man  
whom they  
should meet  
riding in a cart  
to the temple  
of Jupiter.      Thei hadde answer, tawaite & be weel war, 1772  
To sette espies bi besi attendaunce,  
On whom thei mette ridyng in a chaar  
To Iouis temple to doon his obseruaunce,  
And hym resceyue, bi goddis ordenaunce, 1776  
Vpon his hed, withoute mor taryng,  
To sette a crowne in Frige to regne as kyng.
- This man was  
Gordius, who  
after he became  
king ruled  
wisely and set  
his people in  
peace.      And Gordius in his chaar ridyng  
Toward þe temple, thei on the weye hym mette; 1780  
And awaityng ches hym to ther kyng,  
And solempneli hom thei dede hym fette;  
Vpon his hed a riche crowne thei sette.  
And he to them so egal was & meete, 1784  
That [he] hem brouhte in reste & in quiete.
- He suggested  
that the cart  
be given as  
an offering to  
Jupiter;      Thus to the crowne Gordius dede atteyne,  
Be toknis shewed onto his gret auaill.  
And ther discordes & stryues to restreyne, 1788  
He to his lieges gaff notabli counsaill,  
That thei sholde with roial apparail  
[Go] take his char, as he dede hem deuise,  
And offre it up in most lowli wise 1792
- and to make  
it the more  
auspicious,  
it was placed  
in the temple  
before the  
goddess Grace.      In the temple, that was consecrat. [p. 230]  
To Iubiter, a ful solempne place.  
And mor to make ther offryng fortunat,  
Thei sholde it sette, withoute lenger space,\* 1796  
Tofor the goddesse that was callid Grace,  
Which bi myracles ther hertis to appese,  
Sett al the peple in quiet & in ese.
- After Alexander  
had cut the  
knot and seen  
all the mysteries  
of Gordius' cart,  
he grew  
presumptuous      And whan the kyng Alisaundre hadde 1800  
Loosnid the knotte, of which I haue you told,  
And of the chaar[e] which Gordius ladde,  
The secrees seyn & mysteries manyfold,  
Worldli presumpcioun gan make his herte bold, 1804  
Withoute title of any rihtwisnesse,  
The cite Gordie to spoille of his richesse.
- and robbed  
Gordium and  
all Phrygia up  
to Mt. Taurus,  
which is also  
called  
Caucasus.      And al Frigie he robbed eek also  
Vp to the mountayn that callid was Taurus. 1808  
The which[e] hill hath famous names too;  
For it is also named Caucasus,

1778. to regne in Frige H.

1791. his] this H. 1796. space] date B.

- Wher this prynce most victorious  
 Ordeyned first proudli with spere & sheeld 1812  
 Ageyn kyng Darie for to holde a feeld.  
 Vpon a mounteyn thei togidre mette;  
 The marcial pleyn [was] named Horestes, 1816  
 And most proudli ther wardis ther thei sette  
 Al for the werre & nothyng for the pes.  
 Wher Alisandre, in knihthod pereles,  
 Al the Persiens batailed in his siht  
 On Daries partie put vnto [the] fliht. 1820  
 Kyng Alisaundre, shortli to conclude,  
 In his most statli roial magnificence,  
 Set nat his trust in no gret multitude,  
 But in his knihtis, which longe in his *presence* 1824  
 Hadde had in armis longe experience,  
 Wer weel preued in marcial disciplyne  
 Tenhaunce his conquest bi ther prudent doctrine.  
 Which in that iourne han hem so weel born, 1828  
 That in ther noblesse founde was no lak:  
 For sexti thousand of footmen hem befor  
 Thei slouh of Perse, & men on hors[e]bak  
 Other ten thousand, so mortal was the wrak; 1832  
 And fourti thousand, as maad is mencionn,  
 Wer prisoneres [take] & put to ther raunsoun.  
 On Grekis parti, the stori doth weel shewe,  
 Macedonoys on Alisandris side, 1836  
 In comparisoun wer slay[e]n but a fewe;  
 For of footmen & men that dede ride,  
 Thoruh the feeldis, that wer so large & wide,  
 Ther wer that day in al ther mortal stryues 1840  
 Nat ful thre hundred which that lost ther lyues.  
 Darie koude non other rescus make,  
 Fledde at myscheeff in ful gret distresse.  
 His wiff, his douhtre lad awei & take; 1844  
 His tentis spoiled; his stori berth wittenesse.  
 Grekis made glad with ful gret richesse,  
 His coffres spoiled, he fond no bet socour,  
 And he enporissshed of al his hool tresour. 1848

And there he  
fought Darius  
on the Plain of  
Orestes and put  
him to flight.

Alexander  
trusted in  
warlike  
efficiency rather  
than in  
numbers,

and his knights  
slew and  
captured  
thousands of  
Persians.

Less than three  
hundred Greeks  
were slain.

Darius fled in  
distress, his  
wife and  
daughter taken  
captive, his  
tents despoiled  
of all his  
treasure.

1812. proudli] *om.* H.

1815. was] *om.* J, P—named] *namy* H—Horestes] *Adrasties* P.

1816. wardis] *werker* H. 1820. Daryus H.

1824. his] *om.* H.



Taking refuge  
in Babylon, he  
knew not what  
to do,

Whan Darie sauh his dedli auenture,  
Ful pitousli in herte he dede mourne,  
And anon aftir this disconfiture  
To Babilon in haste he gan retourne,  
And whil that he dede ther soiourne,  
Knowyng no recure to hym that myhte auayle  
With Alisaundre to holde mor bataile.

1852

and sent  
letters and  
rich gifts as a  
peace offering  
to Alexander,  
upon whom  
they had no  
effect.

Than of purpos to sette hymself in ese  
And for talegge his dedli fel greuaunce,  
In his entent kyng Alisaundre to plese,  
Cast for to sende hym lettres of plesaunce,  
Yiue hym giftes in ful gret habundaunce.  
But al the sleihtis which Darius hath wrouht,  
Kyng Alisaundre set hem echon at nouht.

1856

1860

Proceeding in  
his conquest,  
Alexander visited  
the temple of  
Jupiter in  
Libya,

This manli kyng kept his conceit cloos,  
List nat shewe what he ment in deede,  
But caste fulli aftir his purpos  
Vpon his conquest ferther to proceede.  
Aftir the getyng of Perse & eek of Mede  
To wynne Surrie, Egipt & Libie-lond,  
Deemyng Fortune reedi to his hond.

1864

1868

and said that he  
was descended  
from the god,

And of his conquest ferther to endite,  
Whan his glorie gan most fresshli shyne,  
The temple of Iubiter cast hym to vesite,  
Which stood in Libie, auctours determyne.  
Saide how he was descendid fro the lyne  
Of thilke god, bor[c]n to been his hair,  
As lord of heuene, fir, water, erthe & hair.

1872

1876

and bribed the  
priests to  
deify him,  
forgetting that  
he was but a  
mortal man.

And that the preestis fulli sholde assente  
With heuenli goddis to maken hym egall,  
Gret riches & tresour he hem sente:  
Thus dreed and mede made hym celestiall.  
Falsli forgete\* that he was mortall,  
And of ambicioun, be marcial apparaille,  
Cast with Darie ageyn to ha[ue] bataille.

[p. 231]

1880

1857. talegge] tabrige H, ta legge J, talegge H 5, R 3,  
taledge P.

1868. Siria P — lyby & Egipt londe H.

1869. of Fortune H.

1876. fir water] watir fyer H — &] om. J, H, R 3, H 5, P.

1881. forgat B, J, R 3.

1882. marcial] mortall H.

- And, as I fynde, how thei dede mete,  
 The[s] too pryncis *with* peeple innumerable  
 In the confrount of the lond of Crete;  
 And kyng Darye of folkes deffensable  
 Brouht into feeld a peeple incomparable,  
 Foure hundred thousand of fotmen fet fro ferre,  
 With Alisaundre that day\* to holde werre.
- 1884 In the mean-  
 time Darius  
 collected a great  
 army and met  
 Alexander on  
 the boundaries  
 of Crete,  
 1888
- An hundred thousand ther cam with hym also,  
 On hors[e]bak in steel[e] armyd briht.  
 And alle this peeple, whan thei hadde ado,  
 Al-be that day ful longe laste the fiht,  
 Wer slayn & take & Iput to fliht.  
 Wher Alisaundre to his ences of glorie  
 Hadde of kyng Darie that day the victorie.
- 1892 but again  
 Alexander  
 was victorious.
- 1896
- And Persiens to ther fynal myscheeff,  
 Withoute merci or payeng of raunsoun,  
 With kyng Darie wer put to gret repreeff,  
 Void of al hope & consolacioun,  
 Fledde, as I fynde, into the regeoun  
 Callid Partie, wher, as it is told,  
 He of that peeple was take & put in hold.
- 1900 The Persians  
 fled into  
 Parthia, where  
 Darius was  
 captured
- 1904
- And thouh his feteres wern of gold maad riche,  
 He hadde therof, God wot, no plesaunce.  
 Fortunys giffis be nat ay iliche,  
 In hir fals wheel ther is such variaunce.  
 Dyuers of cheer, straunge of hir contenaunce,  
 Made Alisaundre with a litil noumbre  
 The multitude of Darie to encoumbre.
- 1908 and fettered  
 with gold.
- 1912 Forsaken by  
 his friends, he  
 was murdered  
 by a froward  
 knight called  
 Bessus,
- 1916
- Withyne a toun [called] Tharsa he was take,  
 In [a] chariet, with cheynis stronge bounde,  
 Of al his freendis pitousli forsake,  
 Lad & thoruh percid *with* many mortal wounde.  
 And this moordre contryued was and founde  
 Bi oon Bessus, a froward rekles knyht,  
 Which stood afforn most forthred in his siht,

1888. be felde H.

1890. that day] for B, J, P.

1893. this] his H.

1903. Parthye H.

1910. Alisaundre] of Alisaundre H.

1912. called] om. H, J, R 3, H 5 — Tharsa Tanca P.

1913. a] om. J, P — I bounde J, ybounde P. 1915. many a H.

who had sworn to  
be loyal to him.  
Yet before he  
died, Darius  
sent an old  
knight to  
Alexander,  
requesting  
him to have  
mercy on his  
wife and  
children,

And was assured be feith of his legiaunce  
To kyng Darie to be trewe in deede. 1920

But this fals traitour (God sende hym a myschaunce!)  
Caused his woundis mortalli to bleede.

Yit or he deied he sente in al his dreede  
A Percien kniht, sad & off gret age, 1924

To Alisaundre to telle hym his massage:

"Go thanke that prince of his hih noblesse,  
Which of\* his grace & merci most habounde,

Hym list to shewe so gret gentillesse 1928  
Vnto my wiff & childre, as it is founde.

For which to hym I am so moche bounde,  
That he myn enmy, of his benignite,

In ther distresse list haue of them pite. 1932

and to  
condescend to  
have him buried  
as a king,

And sithe I see that needis I mut deie  
Thoruh bloodi woundis, which I may nat recure,

Sei Alisaundre, of grace that I preie,  
For to ha[ue] routhe on\* myn auenture, 1936

Next to ordeyne for my sepulture,  
And condescende to graunte myn axyng,

For to be buried as longeth to\* a kyng.  
Prai yng the goddis which been inmortal, 1940

Whan he hath do to quiten hym his meede,  
That of his merci most imperiall

Hym list of grace for to taken heede,  
To burie me, kyng of Perse & Mede; 1944

For yif this fauour be in his herte founde,  
To his noblesse the fame shal ay rebounde.

and to avenge  
his foul murder.

Requeryng hym of his imperial myht  
Of myn foul moordre to seen ech circumstaunce; 1948

For moordre alway calleth to God of riht,  
Neuer cesyng, but bi contynuaunce,

Vp to the heuene to crie for vengauce, —  
Namli on moordre compassed & forthouht, 1952

Which bi auisement is execut & wrouht.

After he had  
given this  
message to the  
knight, he died;

And sithe I haue leid on the this bond,  
To Alisaundre to do my massage,

And hym coniured heer *with* my riht hond 1956  
Tauenge my deth, wrouht bi gret outrage,

1921. sende] sent H. 1927. of] to B.

1936. on] of B. 1939. to] onto B. 1940. Immortal H.

1952. Namli] Namely whan H.

My blood out shad, *with* pale & ded visage,  
 Heer bounde in stokkis, to goddis most benigne  
 With riht hool herte my sperit I resigne."

1960

Thus he lay stark, [for] ther was lefft no blood,[p.232] and Alexander  
 Lik as a-nother mortal creature. buried him  
 with kingly  
 honours.

Whan Alisaundre the moordre vndirstood,  
 As ye han herd remembrid be scripture,  
 He dede ordeyne for his sepulture  
 The funeral feeste holde in al[le] thynges  
 As bi old tyme longed onto kynges.

1964

## ¶ Lenvoye.

**T**HIS tragedie pitous for to heere  
 Sheweth of Fortune þe chaunges lamentable,  
 Of roial tronis of gold & stonis cleere,  
 In worldli princis how thei be euer vnstable.  
 Hir\* fatal wheel most dyuers & chaungable,  
 With vnwar turn list nat hir cours to tarie  
 To throwe hem doun; record upon kyng Darie.

1968

This piteous  
 tragedy shews  
 the lamentable  
 changes of  
 Fortuna and  
 the instability  
 of worldly  
 princes.

1972

Who can or may be ful assured heere  
 To make Fortune to be so trefable,  
 To fynde a weie or serche out the maneere  
 Bi obligacioun to fynde hir vnmutable?  
 Hir double face, the world ay deceyuable,  
 Shewe us ech day how falsli thei can varie  
 Bi couert fraude; record upon kyng Darie.

1976

No one on earth  
 can be certain  
 of Fortuna.

1980

Exaample how Phebus *with* his bemys cleer  
 Sheweth sum morwe his liht most agreable,  
 But longe or eue dirknesse ther doth appeere  
 Thoruh cloudi reynes & mystes long durable,  
 To us declaryng be toknes ful notable,  
 Worldli dignites, now fressh & now contrarie,  
 Can chaunge ther tides; record [up]on kyng Darie.

1988

Like Phoebus,  
 who often  
 shews his clear  
 beams in the  
 morning and  
 is clouded  
 before night,  
 so are the  
 dignities of  
 this world now  
 flourishing and  
 now contrary.

Thoruh all Asie, Perse, & Mede ifeere  
 His lordshipe last, a thyng incomparable.  
 To Ethiopie vnder the mydday speere,  
 Ful of tresour with gold innumerable,  
 His boundis rauhte; Fortune eek seruisable

1992

Darius ruled  
 all Asia, his  
 possessions  
 were without  
 number, until  
 Fortune proved  
 her might on  
 him.

1970. tronis] throwis H.

1972. Hir] Ther B, J, R 3, H, H 5, Their P.

1975. heere] ay heer H.

1988. Can chaunge ther tides] By covert fraude H.

1992. tresour] all tresour H.



Tobeie his lustis, til she gan falsli varie,  
Bi expert fraude to preue hir myht in Darie.

Noble Princes,  
though you sit  
on high thrones,  
remember that  
no lordship  
on earth is  
lasting.

Noble Princis, with hool hert & enteer 1996  
Left up your corages, holdeth this no fable:  
Thouh ye sit hih, conceyueth with good cheer  
No worldli lordshipe in erthe is perdurable;  
And sithe ye been of nature resonable, 2000  
Among remembreth, as thyng most necessarie,  
Al stant on chaung; record upon kyng Darie.

[Here Bochas remembreth the batailes and losse of  
Rewmys of antiquyte/ with the fallyng of diuers  
nobles.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas here  
reminds us of  
the great  
sorrows, the loss  
of realms, and  
the blood  
vainly shed in  
wars since the  
days of the  
Greeks and  
Trojans.

**H**EEER gynneth Bochas remembre in certeyn 2004  
The grete sorwes, the mortal disauailes,  
The losse of reumys, þe blood eek shad in veyn,  
Begunne of werris & marcial apparailles.  
Cald to mynde of olde the fell batailles  
Gunne of antiquite, as maad is mencioun, 2008  
First atween Greekis & them of Troie toun.

It would make  
a compassionate  
heart bleed  
to have all in  
memory.

A pitous herte it wolde make bleede  
To haue in memoire the dreedful gret outrage,  
As ye han herd[el], wrouht in Perse and Mede 2012  
Atween Darie and Alisaundre in ther age.  
Eek atween Romeyns & them of Cartage  
The woful troublis of werris first begunne,  
Cause al the myscheuys that been vnder sonne. 2016

Kingdoms have  
been brought to  
ruin and laid  
desolate by  
dissension,

On outhur parti, who can remembre ariht,  
Now losse, now lucre komth of dyuisioun,  
Now disencres, now heuy & now liht,  
Now lyff, now deth, for short conclusioun; 2020  
For Bochas seith, such fals discencioun  
Hath many kyngdam, that stood in good estat,  
Turnid to ruyne & maad them desolat.

Troy and many  
a strong city  
in Greece and  
Persia, Rome  
and Carthage  
destroyed by  
the cruel rage  
of Mars.

Remembre of Troye the wallis broke doun, 2024  
In Grece destroied many strong cite,  
In Perse & Mede gret desolacioun,  
Rome dispurueied of marcial surete,  
Castellis, tours of old antiquite 2028

2001. necessarie] transitory H.

2004, 6, 7. disavaile, apparaille, batailis H. 2011. memorye H.

2015. troublis] trouble H.

2017. ariht] riht H. 2024. of] on H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 94 verso.

Maad ruynous in Affrik & Cartage,  
Caused be werris & Martis cruel rage.

Who list considren, wrouht bi daies olde  
The cours of conquest of thes werreiours,  
In Alisaundre he cleerli may beholde  
Bi remembraunce of his progenitours  
And of his blood, how al the successours  
Hadde fatalli, or thei dede hen[ne]s wende,  
A sodeyn deth or a shamful eende.

2032 Think of  
Alexander,  
his progenitors  
and his  
successors, how  
all came to a  
sudden or  
shameful death.

2036

Ful many reknid that wer of hys lynage  
For to succede in his pocessiouns,  
To sexe & thretti partyng his heritage,  
To ech assigned ther roial porciouns.  
[And] first, as he made his dyuisiouns,  
He gaf of Frige the prefecture off riht  
To Leonatus, that was so good a kniht.

2040 His estate was  
divided  
amongst  
thirty-six heirs.  
Phrygia fell to  
the share of  
Leonnatus,

2044

But litil\* while last his pocessioun;  
For the contres list hym nat obeie.  
Thei of Athenys hadde indignacioun  
With Antipater, for he dede hem werreye;  
Yit in that werre, pleyntli for to seie,  
Leostenes ther duk, ther gouernour  
Was slayn that day; he fond no bet socour.

[p. 233] but he soon lost  
his kingdom,

2048

And Leonatus, that was his aduersarie,  
Of Antipater the parti to susteene,  
Fond Fortune that day to hym contrarie;  
For in the feeld thowh he rod armed cleene,  
With a sharp spere his wound was maad[e] greene, 2056  
At myscheef slayn, myn auctour doth compile.  
Thus his lordship last nat but a while.

2052 and died  
fighting against  
the Athenians.

Antipater, another successour  
Of Alisaundre, as maad is menciou[n],  
Was be record the\* same fals traitour  
That for his deth[e] tempred the poisoun.  
His sone Cassander acomplisshed the tresoun,  
Bar the cuppe which that made hym sterue, 2064  
With that strong venym whan he dede hym serue.

2060 Antipater,  
another heir,  
was the traitor  
who mixed the  
poison for  
Alexander.

2032. thes] be H.

2037. or] or els H, or ellys H 5. 2038. wer] was H.

2042. And] om. J.

2045. litil] a litil B, J, P. 2061. the] of the B, J.

He desired to  
slay all who  
might be  
suspicious of  
his treason.

Antipater, of this crym coupable,  
Gretli desired in his oppenioun  
Vpon al tho [for] to be vengable,  
That likli wern tesprien his tresoun.  
Drad hym sore, hauyng suspeciou  
List he wer accusid to the statis  
Of crym callid *Illese magestatis*.

2068

2072

His son  
presented the  
fatal cup to  
Alexander, and  
yet Alexander  
had made him  
prefect of  
Caria.

His sone assentid to that horrible deede,  
Which to Alisaundre, beyng in Babiloun,  
Most traitourli, withoute shame or dreede,  
As yē han herd, presentid the poisoun.  
And yit the kyng, as maad is mencioune,  
Thouh he to hym fals was & contrarie,  
He made hym prefect, lord of the lond of Carie.

2076

There were  
many notable  
warriors among  
the heirs:  
some slew one  
another in  
battle;

And among other notable werreious,  
Ther wer thre mo, ful worthi & famous,  
Set in the noumbre of his enheritours,  
Policarpus & Neptolonius.  
And ech of them to other envious,  
Withynne a feeld, the stori doth us lere,  
Euerich slouh other as thei mette ifeere.

2080

2084

Perdiccas,  
perhaps  
the best knight  
of all, was  
given Macedonia  
when Alexander  
lay dying;

Of Perdiccas\* what sholde I write or seyn? —  
Which amonge alle was oon the beste kniht,  
That whan Alisaundre lay deieng in certeyn,  
And gan to feeble of his force & myht,  
Dempte afforn that it sat weel of riht,  
How this Perdiccas, for wisdom & manheede,  
In Macedoyne sholde aftir hym succede.  
And onto hym with cheer & look benigne,  
Vpon his hed for seeknesse compleynyng,  
With ful hool herte for a notable signe,  
Of successioun he gaff to hym a ryng,  
Aftir his day to be crowned kyng  
Of Macedoyne, sithe he myhte most\* auaile,  
Thoruh al his empire to haue the gouernaile.

2088

2092

2096

2100

and yet, although  
he surpassed all  
his comrades  
in prudence  
and strength,  
vicious pride so  
turned his head,

And yit seith Bochas breeffi in sentence,  
Thouh he of knihthod & [of] hih prowessse,  
Of manli force & also of prudence  
Passed al other, the stori berth witnesse,

2104

2068. for to] that J.

2080. notable] nat al H. 2087. Predicas B.

2099. most myhte B.

2102. 2nd of] om. P.

Bi vicious pride & froward boistousnesse  
He was mor hyndred, thoruh his owne outrage,  
Than al his enmyes myhte doon to hym damage.

For thoruh his pride & gret extorsions,  
Fro Macedoyne the peeple of that contre  
Fledde into other straunge regeouns.  
And of presumpcioun, the stori seith, how he  
Began a werre ageyn kyng Tholome,  
Wher he was slayn in alle mennys sihtis,  
Nat of his enmyes but of his owne knihtis.

2108 that  
he drove all  
his people  
away through  
his extortions,  
and, pre-  
sumptuously  
beginning a war  
against  
2112 Ptolemy, was  
slain by his  
own knights.

Eek Anaxarchus of Capadoce kyng,  
Which provynce ioyneth to Surrie,  
Touchyng the boundis, be record of writyng,  
Toward thorient the lond of Armenye,  
Hauyng too contres, Scilice & Ysaurie  
Toward Cipre, & a gret ryueer  
Rennyng amyddes with stremes fressh & cleer.

Ariarathes, king  
of Cappadocia,  
2116

This Anaxarchus, wher he was loth or fayn,  
In daies fewe hath his kyngdam lorn;  
For bi Perdiccas\* proudli he was slayn,  
Off whom that I haue you told befor.  
Thus worldli princis, thouh thei hadde it sworn,  
For al ther lordshipe & domynacioun,  
Bi fraude of Fortune vnwarli be put down.

lost his kingdom  
in a few days,  
for he was  
slain by  
2124 Perdiccas.

Amongis othir princis of that age,  
Vpon Alisaundre duely abidyng,  
Bochas reherseth, Amulchar of Cartage,  
Duk of that cite,\* bi record of writyng,  
Aftir the deth[e] of that worthi kyng,  
As ye han herd, Imoordred be poisoun,  
This saide Amulchar, reparyng to his touen.

2128  
[p. 234] Hamilcar, duke  
of Carthage,  
one of  
Alexander's  
captains,

Was slayn in Cartage, shortli to conclude,  
Of cruel malis & conspiracioun  
Withyne that cite, of fals ingratitude,  
Whan he of knighthod fraunchised had the\* touen,—  
And natwithstandyng al his hih renoun,  
Whan he stood hiest in his felicite,  
He bi the comouns was slayn of that cite.

2132  
2136 was slain by the  
commons of his  
city.

2110. regeouns] naciouns H.

2115. Anaxarchus] of Ariarathes P. 2118. lond] lorde H.

2122. Ariarathes P. 2124. Predicas B.

2126. worldli] worthy H.

2134. be] with H. 2139. the] that B.



[How Eumenides was twies outraied by Antigonus/  
and atte last / deied in prisoun.]<sup>1</sup>

After Alexander  
had completed  
his conquests,  
he claimed that  
he was son and  
heir of Jupiter,

WHAN Alisau<sup>ndre</sup> in his roial estat 2143  
Hadde al conquered, toform as ye ha[ue] herd,  
He lik a god, most pompous & elat,  
As souereyn prince of al this myddelerd,  
To take upon hym was nothyng afferd  
To cleyme in contres, a thyng that was nat fair, 2148  
Of Iubiter to be bothe sone & hair.

and this was  
one of the chief  
causes of  
idolatry.

On of the prynciples, who-so taketh heede,  
That first brouht in fals ydolatrie,  
Was thilke tyme that preestis for fals drede 2152  
His name with goddis gan to magnesie,  
And so to calle hym of feyned flaterie.  
And myd ther temples in Libie on a stage  
Of his liknesse thei sette up an image. 2156

It availed him  
nothing, for he  
died of poison.

But lite or nouht to hym it mihte auaille  
Ageyn his deth[e] for to doon socour,  
Whan the fell poisoun dede his herte\* assaille, 2160  
Which made hym fade as doth a somer flour.  
Of whos empire was non enheritour,  
Sauf in his deiyng, thus stood the woful caas,  
Tween sexe & thretti his lond deuided was.

Before his  
death he lay  
on a couch of  
gold and named  
his successors.

And in his story ful pley[n]li it is told, 2164  
This departis[i]oun, to make it ferme & stable,  
He was leid foorth upon a couch of gold,  
To reherse be toknis ful notable  
Whom he dempte of verray soth most hable 2168  
Of al his princis, pley[n]li to discerne,  
Whan he wer ded his kyngdam to gouerne.

The first among  
them was  
Eumenes, and  
to him  
Alexander gave  
Cappadocia and  
Paphlagonia.

First ther was oon amongis al that pres,  
Next Alisandre the knihtliest[e] man, 2172  
The worthi duc\* callid Eumenydes,  
Whos hih renoun ful weel reherse can  
Prudent Iustinus, the grete historian.  
Ordeyned afforn to gouerne reumys too, 2176  
Al Capadoce & Pafflogonie also.

2155. myddes H.

2159. his herte dede B, J, P. 2171. that] be H.

2173. duc] knyht B, J, knight P — Eumenes P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 95 recto.

His hih noblesse, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 In especial mor to magnefie,  
 Hym lakked nouht of comendacioun  
 That appartened onto cheualrie,  
 To hih prudence or noble policie,  
 Except thre thyngis, myn auctour seip the same,  
 A crowne, a sceptre & a kynges name.

2180 He was a knightly man,  
 and until that  
 time had lacked  
 only a crown,  
 a sceptre and  
 the name of  
 king.

But for that he al othir dede excell  
 Bothe of prudence & famous cheualrie,  
 It is remembrid, as summe bookis tell,  
 That ther wer summe [that] hadde therat envie; 2188  
 For whan Fortune list to sette up hie  
 Any persone alofft upon hir wheel,  
 Summe ar beside that like it neueradeel.

2184 Since he  
 excelled all  
 men in  
 chivalry, some  
 envied him,

Who halt hym euer upon hih mounteyns  
 Fynt gret experience of blastis & of shours,  
 Offt is troubled with storm & wyndi reyns;  
 So of Alisaundre the proude successours,  
 Whan thei sat hiest shynyng in ther flours,  
 Wynd of envie, Fortune heeld so the rother,  
 That ech was besi to destroien othir.

2192 and as most  
 people who live  
 on high  
 mountains are  
 exposed to  
 winds and  
 storms, so it  
 was with the  
 successors of  
 Alexander: each  
 did his best to  
 destroy the  
 others.

On hillis hih it is an impossible  
 A man tabide withoute wynd or reyn;  
 A thyng expert & verra[il]ly visible,  
 Hih clymbyng up is medlid with disdeyn:  
 Pres hath envie, as it is ofte seyn,  
 And thoruh preferryng of Fortune in estatiss  
 Is euer caused gret werre & gret debatis.

2200

This same thyng was weel expert & preevyd  
 Among thes saide roial enheritours  
 Of Alisandre; for ech of hem was greeuid  
 To seen his felawe regnen in his flours.  
 And thus atween these myhti successours,  
 Of fals envie ther gan so gret a striff,  
 That ech made other for to lese his lyff.

2204 Not one of  
 them could bear  
 to see his  
 fellow reign in  
 peace.

And as it is afforn maad menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 Policarpus & Neptolonius  
 Bi a maner fals conspiracioun  
 Ageyn Eumenides wer inli envious.

2212  
 [p. 235] Polyperchon and  
 Neoptolemus  
 conspired  
 against  
 Eumenes, who  
 slew them both  
 2216 in battle;

2188. that] *om.* J. 2199. hillis] *hihtis* H.

2201. verrailly] *verray* J, P. 2203. offten H.

2213. R *begins again.*

2214] Poliperchon and Neptolemus P. 2216. Eumenes P.

- Of whos falsnesse he was suspitious,  
 Til on a day, ther is no mor to seyne,  
 Meetyng in bataille he slouh hem bothe tweyne.
- and this angered  
 Antigonus,  
 prefect of  
 Macedon, so  
 greatly For which[e] slauhtre proude Antigonus, 2220  
 Of Macedoyne prefect & gouernour,  
 Wex in his herte so fel & despitous —  
 And was with-al a noble werreieur —  
 With his knihtis dede hooli his labour 2224  
 Ageyn Eumenides bi marcial apparaille,  
 A feeld assigned, to holde a gret bataille.
- that he set  
 out against  
 Eumenes and  
 forced him  
 to take refuge  
 in a castle, Made upon hym a proud disconfiture  
 As thei metten armed briht in steel, 2228  
 And thus Eumenides, of mortal auture,  
 Fledde at myscheeff into a strong castel,  
 Wherof his knihtis liked nothyng weel;  
 For as the stori pleyntly maketh mynde, 2232  
 That day he fledde & lefft his men behynde.
- where he stood  
 destitute, and  
 finally fled to  
 Argyria, In which castel for he stood destitut,  
 Fro thens he caste in al haste to flee;  
 In his gret myscheeff to fynde sum refut 2236  
 That tyme he drouh hym in-tastrong contre  
 Sum socour gete auengid for to be,  
 Callid Argire bi Greekis of entent,  
 The Latyn corupt of this woord Argent. 2240
- a country rich in  
 silver, and after  
 which the  
 Argyraspides  
 were named, Of Archiraspedes, a peeple that ther duelle,  
 Ther name thei took afftir that regeoun.  
 The which[e] lond, as olde bookes telle,  
 Hath of siluer plente & foisoun; 2244  
 For which[e] cause, bi old descripcioun,  
 It took his name of nature & of riht,  
 Because the soil lik syluer shyneth briht.
- a manly and  
 prudent people,  
 who had been  
 of great help  
 to Alexander. And of this ile, which hath so gret a pris,  
 As myn auctour maketh rehersaile,  
 How the peeple be prouident & wis,  
 Prudent in armys & manli in bataille,  
 Bothe to diffende & proudli to assaile. 2252  
 Which bi ther wisdam & circumspect counsail  
 To kyng Alisaundre stood in gret auail.

2217. whos] was R. 2225. bi] with H — Eumenes P.

2227. upon] on R. 2228. briht armed R.

2230. into a] in ta H. 2232. makith playnly H.

2238. Sum] So R — gete] to get R, to gete H, J, to gett R 3, to  
 geat P. 2241. Argiraspides P.

And Eumenides, oon of his successours,  
 As ye han herd[e], drouh to that contre,  
 Ther to fynde refut & socours  
 In his myscheeff & gret aduersite.  
 And with his woordes of gret auctорite,  
 His noble langage & his fair eloquence,  
 The peple had hym in ful gret reuerence.

2256 There Eumenes  
 was well  
 received,

And for thei wern manli & coraious,  
 Able tassemble bothe in plate & maile,  
 He made hem rise ageyn Antigonus,  
 Bi ther prowesse with hym to ha[ue] bataille.  
 But of fortune his parti gan to faille,  
 Wher thilke peple, the stori tellith thus,  
 Hadde euer afforn[e] been victorious.

2264 and persuaded  
 the peple to  
 aid him against  
 Antigonus; but  
 unfortu-  
 nately the  
 Argyraspides  
 were defeated  
 for the first  
 time in their  
 history, and  
 2268 robbed of their  
 possessions,

Antigonus hath the feeld recurid,  
 That day his knihtis fauht lik wood leouns,  
 In furious teene, of corage assurid,  
 Brak ther tentis & ther paelouns,  
 Spoilled ther castellis, robbed ther dongouns, —  
 Wher that contre, vnwarli thus affraied,  
 Hadde neuer afforn in bataile been outraied.

2272

And of despiht this peep[le] rek[e]lles,  
 Cauht in ther herte gret indignacioun  
 Ageyn ther prince, this said Eumenydes,  
 Which hadde hem brouht to ther destruccioun.  
 And al that peep[le], of oon oppynioun,  
 Presentid hym, it was nat aftir longe,  
 To Antigonus, bounde in cheynys stronge.

2276 which enraged  
 them so that  
 they delivered  
 Eumenes up to  
 Antigonus  
 in chains,

2280

In this processe breeffli to proceede,  
 At gret myscheef he deied in prisoun;  
 He fond no mercy, pley[n]li, as I reede,  
 For al his noblesse nor his hih renoun.  
 Yit of his manhod it is maad menciou[n],  
 Who that his stori list to looke ariht,  
 With Alisaundre ther was no bettir kniht.

2284 and he perished  
 miserably in  
 prison,—

2288

In his conquest eueri hour & space  
 He most cherisshed for his hih noblesse;  
 Aboue al othir stood most in his grace,  
 To helpe & releue folk in ther distresse,

2292 he who had  
 before  
 been  
 most cherished  
 by Alexander.

2255. And] *om.* H — Eumenes P.

2270. day] *om.* H. 2273. castell H.



Al-be that he deied in wrechidnesse:  
To vs declaryng the grete variaunces  
That al-day falle in Fortunys chauncis.

2296

## [¶ Lenvoye.]

Duke Eumenes'  
tragedy again  
shews the  
froward  
doubleness of  
Fortuna.

**T**HIS tragedie of Duk Eumenydes [p. 236]  
Sheweth of Fortune þe froward doubilnesse,

How worldli princis þat be rek[el]les,  
With vnwar chaungis fallen in distresse; 2300  
And ther may been no gretter heuynesse,  
Afftir prosperite, nor no gretter payne,  
Than aduersite which that is sodeyne.

There is no  
greater sorrow  
than sudden  
adversity after  
prosperity.

Grettest envie, wher is grettest p[r]les; 2304

Grettest await, wher is most richesse;

And grettest ese wher is rest & pes:

Wher most discord, most is heuynesse. 2308

And of al sorwe, sorwefullest excesse

Is thilke sorwe that doth a man constreyne,

Aftir prosperite aduersite sodeyne.

Where there is  
rest and peace  
is greatest ease,  
and where there  
is most discord,  
is greatest  
heaviness.

Pryncis in erthe, of power pereles,  
Which excelled al other in noblesse, 2312

Hadde in this world bi conquest most encres,

As Alisaundre his stori berth witnesse.

Remembre the\* fyn of al ther hih prowesse

And the tryumphes to which thei dide atteyne: 2316

Aftir prosperite aduersite sodeyne.

These powerful  
heirs of Alex-  
ander ended in  
sudden  
adversity, six  
and thirty of  
them, all of  
whom had  
great  
possessions.

The stronge enheritour[s] which þat he out ches,  
Sixe & thretti, the noumbre to expresse,

Which hadde pocessioun of kyngdamys dout[e]les, 2320

Ech thyng obeyeng to ther worthynesse,

Til Fortune thoruh hir doubilnesse

Shewed hir myht, vnwarli to ordeyne

Aftir prosperite aduersite sodeyne. 2324

Noble Princes,  
avoid discord,  
envy and  
causeless anger;  
do nothing of  
hasty wilfulness,  
lest there be  
sudden  
adversity.

Noble Princis, tauoide al disencres,

Among your-silff discordes doth repress.

Beth nat envious nor irous causeles;

Werkith no thyng of hasty wilfulness; 2328

Lat discrecioun been your gouverneresse:

2297. Eumenes P. 2300. chaunge H. 2301. ther] thei R.

2304. pres] pes J, peace P.

2308. sorwe] om. H — sorwefullest] sorowfull H.

2309. doth] om. R. 2315. the] ther B.

2318. enheritour R — he] be R, H. 2320. possessions R.

2327. nor] ne H.

For ther mut folwe, iff ye parte on tweyne,  
 Aftir prosperite aduersite sodeyne.

[How queene Olimpiades for she delited in vices  
 moordre and vengeaunce deied atte mischeeff.]<sup>1</sup>

**N**EXT in ordre to Bochas dede appeere,  
 Aftir the myscheef of Eumenides,  
 The grete queen, *with* a ful pitous cheer,  
 Moodir of Alisaundre, Olympiades,  
 Born of the lyne of Eacides;\*  
 Among queenys, hir stori berth witnesse,  
 Excellid al other of beute & richesse.

2332 After Eumenes,  
 Olympias  
 appeared before  
 Bochas.  
 She excelled all  
 other queens in  
 beauty and  
 wealth,

2336

She was douhtir to Neptolonijs,  
 The myhti kyng of Epirothes,  
 And hadde suspect how Neptanabus  
 Bi enchauntement put hymself in pres  
 Of wifli trouthe to make hir rek[e]les.  
 But Bochas heer, for to saue hir name,  
 Writ but a liil of hir sclaudrous diffame.

and was  
 daughter of  
 Neoptolemus.  
 2340 It was  
 suspected that  
 Nectanebes had  
 been her lover,  
 but Bochas  
 wrote little of  
 it.

2344

This said[e] queen, riht fair of hir visage,  
 Was firste brouht foorth in thilke regiouns,  
 Wher all the worthi of blood & of lynage  
 Heeld ther sceptris & ther riche crowns,  
 Thoruhout al Grece with ful pocessiouns;  
 So that this queen that tyme nih & ferre  
 Was of beute callid the lode-sterre.

She was  
 very fair, and  
 called the lode-  
 star of beauty.  
 2348

2348

But among al hir gret prosperite,  
 Hir youthe flouryng in most souereyn noblesse,  
 Hir ioie was medlid *with* gret aduersite,  
 Whan Phelipp Macedo, to hir gret heuynesse,  
 Was mortalli woundid in distresse,  
 In Cithia bacerteyn nacioun  
 Callid Tribalois, as maad is menciou[n].

Her joy was  
 turned to  
 adversity when  
 her husband,  
 Philip,  
 2356

2356

For in that contre upon a certeyn day,  
 Wher-as he fauht & dede his besi payne  
 To gete a cite, & at the siege lay,

lost one of his  
 eyes at  
 a siege in  
 Scythia;  
 2360

2360

2330. ther] that R — ye parte] the party R.

2333. Eumenes P.

2336. Eacides] Gacides B, R, Gaades J.

2339. to] of R — Neoptolemus P. 2341. Nectanabus P.

2343. hir] hym R.

2361. fauht] fauh H. 2362. lay] late H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 96 recto.

And for thassaut dede his stuff ordeyne,  
 He lost vnwarli oon of his eien tweyne, 2364  
 That whan the queen beheeld his sodeyn wounde,  
 She fill for sorwe \* euene plat to grounde.

and her good  
 name was in-  
 jured by the  
 suspicion of her  
 adultery with  
 Nectanebes.

Another thyng, bookis specefie,  
 Troubled hir fame bi gret heuynesse: 2368  
 The suspect sclaudre of aout[e]rie  
 Wrouht bi Neptanabus enchauntyng hir fairnesse,  
 The liht eclipsyng of hir hih noblesse  
 Be swift[e] report for to hyndre hir name, — 2372  
 What fleeth mor swift than doth wikked fame?

What flies more  
 swiftly than  
 evil report?  
 What avails  
 royal blood  
 against it?

In womanheede, as auctours alle write,  
 Most thyng comendid is ther chast honeste;  
 Thyng most sclaudrous ther noblesse tatwite, 2376  
 Is whan princessis of hasti freelte  
 Exceede the boundis of wifli chastite:  
 For what auaieth lynage or roial blood,  
 Whan of ther lyuyng the report is nat good? 2380

The voice of  
 slander once  
 raised is not  
 easily put down.

The hooli bed diffouled of mariage, [p. 237]  
 Or onis soiled may nat recurid be;  
 The vois goth forth & the froward langage  
 Bi many rewem & many gret cite. 2384  
 Sclaudre hath a\* custum, & that is gret pite,  
 Trewe outhur fals, bi contagious soun  
 Onis reised [up] it goth nat lihtli down.

To make  
 matters still  
 worse for  
 Olympias, Philip  
 took Cleopatra,  
 wife of  
 Alexander of  
 Epirus, as his  
 concubine.

And to mor hyndryng of Olympiades, 2388  
 Phelipp from hir dede away\* declayne;  
 And of the kyng of Epirothes  
 The wif he took[e] to his concubyne,  
 Callid Cleopatra, pleynli to termyne. 2392  
 And thus in myscheeff to encrece hir trouble,  
 Ther fals auoutry gan to wexe double.

2363. ordeyne] ordey H.

2366. For sorwe she fill B, R — to] to the R.

2373. doth] om. J, P. 2377. freelte] cruelte H.

2381. diffouled] defoyled P.

2382. nat] om. H.

2383. MS. J, "nota de scandalo," in scribe's hand in red, margin of leaf 96 verso.

2385. a] of B, J, R — &] om. H — gret] om. J, H 5.

2386. outhur] or H — contagious] a contagious R 3, H 5.

2387. up] om. R, J, R 3, H 5.

2389. away dede from hir B, J, R.

Off this processe write I will no more,  
Cause the mateer is abhomynable;  
For kyng Phelipp the bargeyn bouhte sore,  
As is remembred be cronicles ful notable,  
Slayn on a day sitting at his table,  
Ful sodenli or he took any heede; —  
Pausanias dede that cruel deede.

Of which[e] slaughtre folwed a straunge cas,  
As ye han herd, bi Pausanias wrouht:  
Olympiades ful glad & murie was,  
Heuy outward, hir herte void of thouht;  
Yit feynyngli she hath out weies souht  
For hym to holde solempne & roiall  
Lik Greekis rihtis a feeste funerall.

Aftir whos deth, wrouht of gret cruelte,  
Kyng Alisaundre maad no lenger let,  
Made Pausanias taken for to bee  
And to been hangid upon an hih gibet,  
Vpon whos hed ther was a crowne set  
Of gold & perle & riche stonis Inde  
Be Olympiades, in story as I fynde.

For he stood gretli in the queenis grace;  
And as folke dempte of suspeciou<sup>n</sup>,  
Thei mette togidre in many preve place,  
Which gretli turned to hir confusioun;  
For noise aroos thoruh al that regeoun,  
That be thoccasioun of ther misleuyng,  
How Pausanias slouh Phelipp the kyng.

But she anon in hir malis feruent  
Fro the gebet made hym be take doun,  
Made his bodi solempneli be brent,  
Kept his exequies with gret oblacioun\*  
Aftir the rihtis of that regeoun,  
Nat left behynde in parti nor in all  
That appartened to feestis funerall.

Vpon kyng Phelipp, as it wer for the nonys  
To doon hir lord a shame & [a] despiht,  
Solempneli she made brenne the bonis

2396 Thus there was  
adultery on  
both sides, until  
Philip was slain  
at his table by  
Pausanias.

2400

Olympias'  
sorrow was  
feigned;

2404

2408

and when  
her son  
Alexander  
hanged  
Pausanias,  
she set a  
rich crown on  
his head,

2412

2416 for he had  
been her lover  
and stood high  
in her favour.  
This caused  
still more  
scandal,

2420

2424 She then had  
him taken down  
from the  
gallows, and his  
body was burnt  
with royal  
ceremonies

2428

on that of King  
Philip, to do  
her lord a shame  
and a despite.

2432

2396. is] is so H.

2417. as] om. R. 2420. thoruh] thoruhout H.

2424. be] to be R. 2425. be] to be R.

2426. exequias R — oblacioun B. 2431. a] om. R.



Of Pausanias, for a fals appetit, —  
 Vnto no man she hadde so gret delite;\*  
 For which this feste was lik in alle thynges  
 To thexequies of princis & of kynges. 2436

She also made  
 an offering to  
 Apollo of the  
 sword with  
 which he killed  
 Philip.

She made his suerd[e] also to be take,  
 With which he slouh Phelipp the grete kyng,  
 Offrid it up onli for his sake  
 To forn Appollo, be record of writyng. 2440  
 Which to hir was sclaunder & gret hyndryng,  
 Caused folk deeme in ther entent,  
 To slen kyng Phelipp how she was of assent.

All her  
 pleasure was  
 set on cruelty.  
 She caused  
 Cleopatra to  
 hang herself  
 and murdered  
 her daughter.

To been cruel was set al hir plesauce: 2444  
 For merciles, void of al pite,  
 On Cleopatre causyng this vengauce,  
 That she hirsilff[e] heeng upon a tre;  
 Moordrid hir douhtir, the stori ye may see. 2448  
 What malis may, yif it be declared,  
 Vnto the malis of wommen be compared?

No malice can  
 be compared to  
 the malice of  
 women. One  
 in a thousand  
 may be  
 virtuous, one in  
 two thousand  
 merciful; and  
 when enraged,  
 no tiger is  
 more cruel.

I speke of them that be malicious  
 And list of custum for to be vengable: 2452  
 Among a thousand oon may be vertuous,  
 And in too thousand sum oon is merciablen;  
 But whan thei been of rancour vntretable,  
 Ther is no tigre mor cruel dout[c]les, 2456  
 Record I take off Olympiades.

Olympias  
 thought herself  
 strong because  
 Alexander had  
 conquered  
 Persia;

And she of malis was mor set affire  
 Texecute boldli hir vengauce,  
 Bi thoccasioun of the gret empire 2460  
 Of Perse & Mede, ful famous in substaunce,  
 Which stood be conquest vnder the gouernaunce  
 Of Alisaundre, wherbi she thouhte hir strong  
 Tacheve ech thyng, wher it wer\* riht or wrong. 2464

but Alexander  
 was poisoned in  
 Babylon.

Dempte hir poweer sholde ay contune [p. 238]  
 Bi the mene of his hih mageste.  
 God is strenger than the queen Fortune,  
 Which suffred hir sone in his most dignite 2468  
 In Babiloyne poisouned for to bee,  
 As is remembred in many old histories,  
 Aftir his tryumphes & [al] his gret victories.

2434. delite] despiht B, R, J, P. 2436. To] of H.

2454. is] may be H. 2459. Texecute] Execute R.

2464. wher] whether P — wer] be B, R, J, P, H 5.

2465. ay]ay wey R. 2471. al]om. P — gret]om. R, J, hih H.

But for to passe breeffli by\* writyng,  
 Touchyng this queen, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 Whan ded was Phelipp, the famous myhti kyng,  
 She hadde off Macedoyne ful pocessioun,  
 And gouerned that myhti regioun,  
 Wher lik a woluesse, as auctours of hir write,  
 To shede blood she gan hirsilff delite.

2472 She governed  
 Macedonia  
 like a wolness.

In hir tirannye most feruent & irous,  
 Reioisshe in slaughtre & to see men bleede;  
 For serpent non was mor malicious  
 Than was this queen, in bookis ye may reede.  
 Yit afftir al this she resceyued hir meede;  
 For thouh Fortune fauoured hir a while,  
 Yit with hir treynes she koude hir weel begile.

2480 No serpent  
 was more  
 malicious.

The eende of tirauntis & eek of tiraunessis,  
 And of moorderis, be thei neuer so wood,  
 Of poisounmongeris & enchaunteressis,  
 Of fals supplantours, contrarie to all good,  
 And of conspireres & them that thriste blood, —  
 Alle thes muste han bi Goddis purueyaunce  
 Heer short liff or sodenli vengauce.

2488 Tyrants and  
 tyrannesses,  
 poisonmongers  
 and enchan-  
 tresses have  
 short lives.

In Macedoyne this queen was most behatid  
 For hir vengable mortal oppressioun;  
 And Cassander ageyn hir hath debatid  
 And gunne a werre upon hir regeoun,  
 Which Talisaundre mynystrid the poisoun,  
 As ye han herd, afforn of hym deuised,  
 Bi Antipater most mortalli practised.

2496 She was  
 hated in  
 Macedon,  
 and when  
 Cassander  
 made war  
 on her,

She fond no reffut, but took hir to the fliht,  
 This cruel queen, this Olympiades,  
 Into a mownteyn that stood ferr out of siht;  
 And of hir kyn ther folwed hir gret pres,  
 Supposyng talyued ther in pes.  
 For on that hill stood a gret dongoun,  
 Strongli walled abouten envirooun,

2500 she fled to  
 a mountain  
 stronghold

Which that marchid to a gret cite  
 Callid Epidna, stondyng in gret doute,  
 Because Cassander of old enmyte

2508 near Epidna,  
 where she was  
 besieged by  
 Cassander and  
 captured by  
 treachery.

2472. by] the B, R, to the J.

2492. Heer] Outhir her H — or sodenli] on sodeyn R.

2496. hir] his R, a H. 2504. talyued] ta lyven H.

- Hadde for hir leide a seege [al] aboute.  
 And non was hardi for to issen oute,  
 Til Cassander, of fals compassed tresoun, 2512  
 Made with them a composicioun.
- Cassander  
 assured her  
 that she might  
 live in peace,  
 His feith was leid that tyme for hostage,  
 Bi oth assurid to Olympiades,  
 Bi couert fraude vnder fair langage, 2516  
 To suffren hir with hym to lyue in pes.  
 But of his promys, he fals & rek[e]les,  
 For vnder trete, as maad is mencioun,  
 The queen he took & cast hir in prisoun. 2520
- but broke his  
 promise.  
 Removed from  
 prison, she faced  
 her enemies  
 with imperial  
 courage,  
 But wil ye seen a roial hih corage,  
 How boldeli, delyuered fro prisoun,  
 She descendid, imperial of visage,  
 With al hir maidnes aboute hir enviroun, 2524  
 Hir enmyes present, wodere than leoun,  
 Seyng hir stonde so statli of hir face,  
 Whan thei wer proudest tareste hir & manace.
- attired for the  
 occasion like an  
 empress in rich  
 purple and gold.  
 She was arraied of purpos for the nonys, 2528  
 As seith Bochas, in most statli wise;  
 In riche purpil, gold & precious stonis,  
 Lik an emperesse in the Grekissh guise.  
 Hir list nat fleen, the stori doth deuise, 2532  
 With cry nor noise passed nat hir boundis,  
 Whan that hir blood down railed from hir woundis.
- She did not  
 try to escape,  
 even when the  
 blood flowed  
 from her  
 wounds.  
 She nat affraied in al hir mortal shour[e]s;  
 Void of al fear[e] list nat bowe hir chyne, 2536  
 Make no praieer to hir tormentour[e]s,  
 Nor no tokne of corage femynyne.  
 Vpriht she stood[e], list nat down declyne,  
 Gaff evidence\*, as it is comprehendid, 2540  
 Of what lyne & blood she was descendid.
- She stood erect  
 and shewed of  
 what line she  
 was descended.  
 Never did a  
 prince or  
 princess die  
 more proudly.  
 For vnto tyme that she gaf up the breth,  
 Was neuer sey[e]n prince nor princesse  
 That mor proudli took ther fatal deth. 2544  
 For as I deeme, hir marcial hardynesse  
 Cam from Bellona, of armys cheef goddessse;  
 Outher she hadde it bynfluence of corage  
 Youe bi the goddis to hire & hir lynage. 2548

2511. issen] isshu H. 2516. fair] fals H.

2531. the] ther H — Grekis R. 2533. nor] &amp; H.

2536. cheyne R, cheyn H.

2540. evidence] Euidencis B, R, J, R 3, H 5, P. 2546. fro R.

Force is a vertu, bookis spesefie,  
 Ageyn al vices to make resistence;  
 But froward rancour & wood\* malencolie  
 Gaff hir a spirit of feyned pacience,  
 A fals pretence of hih\* magnificence,  
 Ascauns\* she hadde been in vertu strong,  
 For trouthe to haue endurid eueri wrong.

Contrarious force made hir despitous,  
 Strong in hir erroure to endure peyne;  
 Of obstynat herte she was fell & irous,  
 In dethis constreynt list nat to compleyne.  
 Countirfet suffraunce made hir for to feyne;  
 Nothyng of vertu, pleynli to termyne,  
 Nor of no manerys\* that be femynyne.

In hir entrailles al malis was enclosed  
 And al contagious venym serpentyne,  
 Nat lik a woman, but as a feend disposid,  
 Able to destroie al vertuous disciplyne:  
 Thus she began; thus she dede fyne.  
 In vicious moordre she dede hir ay delite,  
 Wherfor of hire me list no mor tendite.

[p. 239] Power is a  
 virtue to resist  
 vice; but it  
 was perverse  
 rancour and  
 mad rage that  
 2552 gave her a  
 false pretence  
 of magnificence.

2556 Obstynacy kept  
 her from  
 complaining;  
 there was  
 neither virtue  
 nor womanli-  
 ness in her.

2560

2564 Her nature was  
 like that of a  
 fiend.

2568

### ¶ Lenvoye.

ALLE ye that shal this tragedie see,  
 Of routhe & merci hath compassioun,  
 To seen a princesse from hir imperial see  
 So vnwarli by Fortune throwe down.  
 Of whos myscheeff this was thoccasioun,  
 That in thre thynges was set most hir plesaunce:  
 In vicious lust\*, in moordre & in vengauce.

2572 Have com-  
 passion on this  
 princess, so  
 suddenly  
 thrown down  
 by Fortune.

2576

Alas, that euer the mortal cruelte  
 Of bloodi suerd bi execucioun  
 Sholde been appropriid to femynyte,  
 Ageyn the nature of ther condicioun!  
 Causyng the fynal sclaudrous confusioun

2580 Alas, that  
 women should  
 be so  
 unnatural as to  
 draw the  
 sword!

2551. wood] proud B, R, J. 2553. hih] his B, hir R.  
 2554. Ascauns] As scauns B, J, As skawns R 3.  
 2559. constreynt] compleynt H.  
 2562. manerys] mannys B, R, J, R 3, H, mannes H 5.  
 2563. And in hir entraile H. 2565. as] like H.  
 2569. tendite] endite H. 2575. thynges] kynges R.  
 2576. lust] lyff B, R, J, life P — 3rd in] om. H, J, H 5, P, fals  
 R 3. 2580. the] om. H.



- Of Olympiades, heer put in remembraunce,  
For vicious lust, moordre & fals vengauce.
- The serpent  
hides under  
fresh flowers,  
and deep pits  
lie beneath  
crystal waters.
- Vnder fressh flours, riht soote & fair to see, 2584  
The serpent dareth with his couert poisoun.  
In cristal watres that calm & smothe\* bee  
Arn pereillous pettis ful of decepcioun.  
Men seen alday bi cleer inspeccioun 2588  
In feynyng facis angelik suffisaunce;  
Hid vndir-nethe rancour & gret vengauce.
- Though she  
excellid all  
in beauty,  
no princess was  
ever more  
savage and  
revengeful.
- Thouh she excellid of hir natiff beute 2592  
Al othir princ[ess]is of that regeoun,  
Was neuer sey[e]n feller non than she,  
To execute lik hir oppenyoun  
The pereilous treynys contreued of tresoun,  
And specialli in hir pompous greuaunce, 2596  
Wher she hated, for to do vengauce.
- Noble Prin-  
cesses, be  
merciful and  
forgiving,  
temper your  
indignation with  
pity.
- Noble Princessis, set hih in dignite,  
Doth aduertise of discrecioun,  
In your most poweer & largest liberte 2600  
Beth merciable & doth remyssion,  
Sugreþ with pite your indignacioun,  
Lat grace & merci tempre your hih puissaunce,  
Of Olympiades eschewyng the vengau[n]ce. 2604
- Cankered  
rancour does not  
belong to  
womanhood;  
and where  
mercy reigns  
grace abounds.
- Exilith rigour ferr out of contre,  
Yiue hym with you no iurediccioun.  
To womanheede longeth nat, parde,  
Of cancred rancour newe execucioun. 2608  
Wher mercy regneth, of grace ther is foisoun,  
Hath this in mynde bi long contynvaunce,  
Of Olympiades forgetyng the vengauce.
- Let patience  
dwell in your  
hearts;
- Lat pacience bi vertuous plente 2612  
Withynne your hertis purchace a mansioun;  
Lat your compassioun attempren equite,  
That riht excede nat the boundis of resoun,  
So that your femynyn humble entencioun 2616  
Be alway bridled be prouident suffraunce,  
Voidyng al excessis of rigour & vengauce.

2584. faire &amp; soote H.

2586. smothe] soote B, R, soot J.

2589. feynyng] femynyne H, H 5, femynyn R 3, feminine P.

2597. for] om. R. 2600. largest] lagest R.

2602. your pite with H.

For it is said of old auctorite,  
 To wommen longeth bi disposicioun  
 Meeknesse in langage, in port humylite,  
 In al vertu humble subieccioun,  
 Void of manacis, striff & contencioun,  
 So that no man in your attendaunce  
 Espie no tokne of rancour nor vengauunce.

for it is said  
 of old, that  
 meekness and  
 humility are  
 appropriated  
 to womankind.

2620

2624

The especial mene, the parcialite  
 Sholde of al merci be descripsioun  
 Rebounde to women; for of antiquite  
 The lamb nat vsed to pleie the leoun,  
 Nor no meek dowue envied the faucoun.  
 Nor to your sect, bi natural accordaunce,  
 Sitt nouthur rigour nor hasti fel vengauunce.

The lamb is  
 not accustomed  
 to play  
 the lion, nor  
 does the dove  
 envy the  
 falcon.

2628

2632

This symple Lenvoie, resceyueth it at gre  
 And hath therof non indignacioun,  
 Lowli direct to your benignite  
 Onli of meeknesse & no presumpcioun,  
 Knowyng of kynde your inclynacioun  
 Disposed is bi natural purueiaunce  
 Vnto al merci, & nothyng onto vengauunce.

[p. 240] Let this simple  
 envoy not  
 offend you, for  
 it is lowly  
 directed to  
 your benignity  
 by one who  
 knows that your  
 nature is dis-  
 posed to mercy.

2636

[How Agathodes of lowe birthe born atteyned to  
 roial dignite/ ended in pouerte and wrecchid-  
 nesse.]<sup>1</sup>

I HAUE herd seid of ful yore agon,  
 A whirle-wynd[e], blowing nothing softe,  
 Was in old Inglissh callid a rodion,\*  
 That reiseth duste & strauh ful hih alofte.  
 And in thascendyng (it falleth so ful ofte),  
 Thouh it be bor[e]n almost to the skie,  
 Wher it becomth ther can no man espie.

2640 A whirlwind  
 used to be  
 called a rodion;  
 and when it  
 rises, no man  
 can say what  
 becometh of it.

2644

2629. 2nd the] with be H.

2630. dowue] down (?) H — Facoun H.

2633. This stanza is omitted in H.

2636. no] none R.

2640. The Explicit to Book IV and Incipit to the Prologue of Book V are misplaced here in H.

2641. whorle wynde H, whyrwynd H 5.

2642. rodian B, other MSS. and P, rodion.

2644. it] is H. 2645. to] in to H, R 3.

2643. That] And H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 97 verso.

Smoke often  
ascends  
mountain high;  
but just as  
often, when  
a sudden rain  
comes, it  
descends again.

Out of forgis bi fire þat smethis make,  
Bi cleer experience it is ful ofte seyn, 2648  
That thes infernal ougli smokes blake  
Transcende the coppe of many gret mounteyn;  
But ofte sithe bi a ful sodeyn reyn  
Al such ascenciouns, bi rage of wynd up blowe, 2652  
With vnwar tourn be reuersed & brouht lowe.

One of the  
greatest of  
misfortunes  
is when  
a low-born  
wretch  
is lifted to  
high estate.

And semblably to putte it at a preeff  
And execute it bi cleer experience,  
On the moste contrarious myscheeff 2656  
Founde in this erthe, bi notable euidence,  
Is onli this: bi fortunat violence  
Whan that a wrech[e], cherliss of nature,  
Thestat of princis vnwarli doth recure. 2660

A crowne of  
gold is not  
suitable for the  
head of a  
knaue, nor  
should a stupid  
clerk wear a  
ring.

A crowne of gold is nothyng accordyng  
For to be set upon a knauis hed;  
A foltissh clerk for to were a ryng  
Accordeth nothyng, who that kan take heed. 2664  
And in this world ther is no gretter dreed  
Than poweer youe, yif it be weel souht,  
Vnto such on that first roos up of nouht.

We do not set  
precious stones  
in copper; and  
the estate of  
political power  
is lost when  
knaues have  
governance.

Ther is no maner iust convenience, 2668  
A roial charboncle, rubie or garnet,  
Nor a chast emeraud of vertuous excellence,  
Nor ynde saphirs in coper to be set, —  
Ther kyndli poweer in foul metal is let; 2672  
And so thestat of politik puissance  
Is lost wher-euer knaues haue goðernaunce.

They rise up  
like windy  
smokes; and a  
crowned ass  
is more to be  
dreaded than  
a lion.

For a tyme thei may weel up ascende,  
Lik wyndi. smokes ther boistous fumys sprede. 2676  
A crownid asse, pleynli to comprehende,  
Void of discrecioun is mor for to dreede  
Than is a leoun: for the ton in deede  
Of his nature is myhti & roiall; 2680  
Void of discrecioun, the tothir bestiall.

The lion is  
merciful to  
those who lie  
prostrate before  
him; the  
crowned ass  
is always cruel.

The gentil nature of a strong leoun  
To prostrat peep[e] of kynde is merciaal; 2684  
For vnto all that falle afforn hym down  
His roiall puissance cannat be vengable.

2648. often H.

2654. semblable R. 2659. a wrech] wrecches J.

2679. a] om. H. 2682. The] This R.

But cherlissch wolues, bi rigour vntretable,  
And foltissh assis, eek of bestialite,  
Failyng resoun, braide euer on cruelte.

2688

Non is so proud as he that can no good,  
The leudere hed, the mor presumpcioun,  
Most cruelte & vengauce in louh blood,  
Wher malepertnesse, ther indiscrecioun.  
Of cherl & gentil make this dyuisioun:  
Of outhur of them I dar riht weel reporte,  
The stok thei cam fro, therto thei wil resorte.

No one is so  
proud as a  
good-for-  
nothing;  
ignorance and  
presumption,  
2692 impudence and  
indiscretion, go  
hand in hand.

The rose knowe be colour & suetnesse,  
And violettis for ther fressh tarage,  
The netle rouh[e] for his fel sharpnesse,  
Thistlis, breeris prikyng bi gret outrage:  
And thus considred the rote of ech lynage,  
Froward techchis been euer in cherlis founde,  
Wher vnto gentillesse ay vertu doth rebounde.

2696 The rose and  
the violet and  
nettles and  
briars are  
always true to  
their stock, and  
rudeness is in-  
variably found  
2700 in the line of  
churls.

Lat men bewar in special of o thyng,  
How gret decepcioun is in fals coignage:  
The plate may be briht in his shewyng,  
The metal fals & shewe a fair visage.  
Al is nat gold, to speke in pleyn langage,  
That shynith briht; concludyng of\* resoun,  
Vnder fair cheer is ofte hid fals poisoun.

We must  
remember that  
2704 all is not gold  
that shines  
bright;

For as a skie or an ougli cloude  
Which that ascendith lowe out of the se,  
And with his blaknesse doth the sunne shroude,  
That men may nat his gret[e] brihtnesse see  
Nor haue no counfort of his cleer beute,  
So vicious techchis, I do you weel assure,  
Difface ful ofte the giftes of nature.

for vicious traits  
deface the  
2712 gifts of nature  
no less than  
ugly black  
clouds obscure  
the sun.

2716

God onto summe hath youen bi nature  
For to excellen another in fairnesse;  
Yit in vicis, be record of scripture,  
Thei wer disclaundred, Bochas berth witnesse:  
Outward sugre, inward bittirnesse.  
Bi which example, to purpos I may call  
Agathodes, fulfilled of vices all.

[p. 241] God has made  
some men fair  
yet vicious, as  
was Agathocles.

2720

2692. Wher] With P — malapertnesse R, J, R 3, malapertenesse  
H, malapertnes P

2703. bewar] ware R. 2708. of] on B, J, H 5, R.

2709. often H — hid] om. R.

2717. hath] as R. 2723. Agathocles P.



If I were to  
describe his  
outrageous life,  
it would ruin  
the paper I  
write on.

In this stori he kometh now on the ryng,  
Which of beute hadde passyng excellence;  
But to declare his vicious lyuyng  
And to descryue his outraious offence, —  
Yif I sholde writen in sentence  
Lik his demerites hooli the maneer,  
It wolde thoruh perse & blotte my paper.

2724

2728

He was the  
son of a potter  
and too proud  
to follow his  
father's trade.

Touchyng his berthe, of louh[e] bed descendid,  
Sone of a pottere, the story ye may see,  
In no vertu I fynde hym nat comendid,  
Except nature gaff hym gret beute.  
Fostrid in myscheeff & in gret pouerte,  
Hadde eek disdeyn, I can hym nat excuse,  
Of hatful pride his fadris craft to vse.

2732

2736

Through his  
great beauty  
he rose to high  
estate, and  
although he was  
soiled by pride  
and unnatural  
vice,

Bi the mene of his gret fairnesse  
To hih estat he cam fro louh degre;  
Yit in a vice which I wil nat expresse  
He disusid cursidli his beute  
Ageyn nature, that euel mut he\* the.  
And soiled he was, shortli to specefie,  
With al the vici\* of pride & lecherie.

2740

2744

God allowed him  
for a time to be  
fortunate and  
govern nations.

Yit natwithstondyng his fals condiciouns,  
God suffred hym to come to hih estat,  
And to gouerne dyuers naciouns,  
I fynde a while how he was fortunat,  
In his lecherie ay pompous & elat;  
And in a cite callid Ciracuse  
The said[e] vices he frowardli\* gan<sup>o</sup> vse.

2748

In Syracuse he  
had the com-  
mand of one  
hundred knights

And for he hadde beute & gret myht,  
To alle vices his youthe he dede enclyne,  
And koude also foorthre hymself ariht,  
Of elloquence expert in the doctryne.  
And, as is said, thouh he cam of low lyne,  
Yit, as it is put in remembraunce,  
An hundred knihtis he hadde in gouernaunce.

2752

2756

and purchased  
the office of  
centurion.  
Afterwards he  
was chosen a  
tribune and  
finally he was  
elected duke.

Off centurien he purchacid an offis,  
And that tyme he took the ordre of kniht;  
Aftir chose a tribun of gret pris,  
And gat gret fauour in the peeplis siht.

2760

2727. offence] diffence H. 2742. he] thei B, R, J.  
2744. viciis] spiciis B, R, H, spiciis J, R 3, spices H 5, spises P.  
2751. he frowardli] frowardli he B, R, J. 2756. as] as it H.

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And in this while, it fill so anon riht,  
Of Siracusis he was maad duk & hed  
Bi eleccioun, because ther lord was ded.

2764

Which with Siciliens heeld a mortal striff;  
But Agathodes made hem\* victorious,  
Took ther duchesse aftir to his wiff,  
Bi mene wheroff he wex ful glorious.  
And in his glorie he greuh riht despitous,  
Forgat hymself, thus growyng in estat,  
Wherthoruh his cite & he wer at debat.

2768

He defeated the  
Sicilians and  
married their  
duchess, and,  
increasing in  
magnificence  
and power,

His condicioun whan thei gan espie,  
And sauh hym werke al of presumpcioun,  
The peeple anon, knowyng his tirannye,  
Exilid hym out of ther regioun.  
In his exil, as maad is menciouun,  
He coude fynde no bettir cheuisaunce,  
But cam tacite that callid was Murgauunce.

2772

grew proud and  
quarrelled with  
his city.

2776

Wher bi his sleiht sotil fals auis,  
He so demened hym in the peeplis siht,  
That of a pretor thei gaff hym an offis,  
He meuyng them in al that euer he miht  
Geyn Siracusis to make hem stronge & fihht,  
Of entent on them tauenged bee,  
Cause for his exil out of that cite.

2780

His people  
exiled him to  
Murgantia,  
where he  
became a  
pretor and  
tried to stir  
up strife  
against  
Syracuse in  
revenge.

2784

But in [his] exil, the stori seith non othir,  
It was so wrouht bi mediacioun  
Of duk Amulchar, that was his sworn brother,  
Siracusanis off oon entencioun  
Callid [him] hom ageyn into ther toun;  
And ther he was restored to his place  
And reconciled to the peeplis\* grace.

2788

Duke Hamilcar  
persuaded the  
Syracusans to  
restore him;  
and after the  
reconciliation  
they also made  
him a pretor.

2792

And vnto hym thei gaf be gret auis,  
Bassent of lordis & al the comounte,  
Of a pretor newli an offis.  
For pretores of custom callid be  
Officers that duelle in a\* cite,  
And han ful charge bi doom & iugementis  
To putte al gilti to peyne & to tormentis.

2796

2800

2767. Agathocles P — hem] hym B.

2773. condiciouns H — gan] did H.

2775. knowyng his] all of R.

2791. him] om. H, R, J, R 3, H 5, P.

2793. peeplis] kyngis B, R, J. 2798. a] the B, R, J.

- Armed with  
new authority,  
he caused all  
the senators to  
be slain,
- Than of newe this Agathodes, [p. 242]  
Because he hadde mor auctorite,  
Caste for to trouble the quiete & the pes  
Of Siracusi; & out of that cite 2804  
Alle the senatours grettest of dignite,  
Of mortal vengauce this tiraunt made anon  
Withoute excepcioun be slayn euerichon.
- and not content  
with that,  
pillaged the  
whole of Sicily  
and claimed the  
title of king.
- This hasti slaughtre wrouht bi tiran<sup>ny</sup>e 2808  
Miht nat assuage nor staunche his fel corage,  
Til he ther tresours took bi robberie,  
And al Sicile he spoiled be pillage.  
Cast of pride upon an hier stage 2812  
For tascende bi slehti fals werkyng,  
Of al that regeoun he to be crowned kyng.
- Put to flight  
by the duke of  
Carthage,
- Made his subgettis, maugre them, hym dreedyng,  
To calle hym kyng, and in especiall, 2816  
Oon the most worthi prince tho lyuyng  
That sat in chaier of mageste roiall,—  
Til Fortune shoop he muste haue\* a fall;  
For of Cartage the duk, a worthi kniht, 2820  
Fauht with hym twies & put hym to the fliht.
- he returned home  
in disgrace,
- Wherthoruh he stood in myscheef disespeired,  
And of al peeple he was had in disdeyn;  
To Siracuse in haste he is repeired 2824  
And to his cite retourned hom ageyn,  
Ther abidyng in dreed & noun certeyn,—  
For whan Fortune gan ageyn hym take,  
His freendis olde of newe han hym forsake. 2828
- and, collecting  
a new army,  
defeated the  
Carthaginians
- In that myscheeff he abood nat long,  
As the processe maketh rehersaille,  
Gadred peeple & made hymselfen strong,  
Onli in purpos al Affrik to assaille, 2832  
With them of Cartage hadde a gret bataille,  
Them discourtfited, as Fortune list ordeyne,  
Bi hih prowesse of his sonis tweyne.
- with the help  
of his two  
sons,  
Archagathus  
and Heraclida.
- Artagathus Icallid was the ton, 2836  
Wonder delyuer, a man of gret[e] myht,  
The seconde brother, most worthi of echon,

2818. chaer R. 2819. haue] han B.

2831, 32 are transposed in R, but correction indicated.

2832. for tassaile H, R 3, H 5. 2834. discourtforted R.

2836. Archagathus P. 2837. a] &amp; a B, H, R, H 5, R 3.

Callid Eraclida, which in that mortal fht  
 Preued hymselff that day a manli kniht;  
 For bi ther manhod, in which ther was no lak,  
 Thei of Cartage wer felli put abak.

2840

For thouh so were bi fortune of the werre  
 Agathodes hadde that day victorie,  
 Fals couetise made hym for to erre  
 And eclipsed the liht of his glorie.  
 For as it is remembred in historie,  
 Lik as his berth, as it toform termyned,  
 To al falsnesse his corage was enclyned.

2844

Although he  
 was victorious,  
 covetousness  
 made him err,

2848

Cruel of custum, of herte merciles,  
 His will was lawe, wher it were\* wrong or riht;  
 Contrarie taccord, frowar[d] vnto pes,  
 Proud & surquedous in his owne siht  
 Wher his poweer stretchid & his myht,  
 Lik a tiraunt natureli disposed  
 Texecute vengauunce afforn purposed.

2852

and, true to  
 his low origin,  
 he became a  
 revengeful  
 tyrant.

2856

He thouhte he hadde poweer for to bynde  
 Fortunis wheel for to abide\* stable,  
 Which is a thyng contrarie to hir kynde,  
 Whos propirte is to be variable:  
 His pride, alas, was to abhomynable;  
 For mortal prynce is non that may restreyne  
 Hir vnwar tourn nor hir cours sodeyne.

2860

He thought he  
 had power to  
 bind fast  
 Fortune's  
 wheel, the  
 nature of  
 which is to be  
 unstable;

Bi influence of the heuenli steris,  
 The vnkouth cours aboue celestiall,  
 Bi Fortune, & fauour of the werris,  
 This Agothodes, of berthe but\* rurall,  
 Promooted was vnto estat roiall.

2864

but pride,  
 outrageous  
 behaviour and  
 low birth  
 caused him  
 to fall.

2868

Til pride, outrage & froward engendrure  
 Caused in his lordship he myht nat long endure.

Fortune of kynde is so flaskisable,  
 A monstrous beeste departed manyfold,  
 A slidyng serpent, turnyng & vnstable,  
 Slepир to gripe; on whom ther is non hold,

2872

Fortune is like  
 a serpent,  
 slippery to the  
 grasp. There is  
 no hold on her.

2839. Heraclida P — which] with R. 2843. the] that R.

2848. 1st as] *om.* H, R 3, H 5, P — it toform] it toform is H,

R 3, it is toform H 5. 2851. were] was B, *om.* J.

2858. tabide B. 2864. enfluence R.

2867. Agathocles P — but] ful B, R, J, P, H 5.

2869. engendrure] aventure H, engendur R 3.

2870. nat] *om.* H.

2874. Slepир] Slipir H, R 3, Sliper J, P, Slyper H 5 — non] no R.



As in this book declared is & told,  
 Hir poweer preeued on princis rek[e]les: 2876  
 Record with other on Agathodes.

Agathocles was  
 born in poverty  
 and rose to  
 royal estate;  
 his fall was  
 the more  
 grievous because  
 sudden.

As ye han herd rehersed in sentence,  
 Symple & bare was his natyuite,  
 Brouht up & fostred in gret indigence, 2880  
 Out of a stok spryngyng of pouerte,  
 Roos to thestat of roial dignite.

The\* risyng vnkouth, merueilous tatteyne,  
 The fal mor greuou because it was sodeyne. 2884

From Siracuse he was exiled twies; [p. 243]

Vengable\* of herte wher he hadde myht.  
 Of Affrican[e]s disconfited thries;  
 Euer in bataile of custum put to fliht. 2888

Hadde an vsaunce to robbe day & niht,  
 And lik a tiraunt, ageyn conscience,  
 To spoile his subiectis bi rauynous violence.

His two  
 sons were slain  
 in Africa; and  
 he became weak  
 in his limbs and  
 was stricken by  
 pestilence.

Hyndred bi Fortune, wherof he was nat fayn, 2892

Hir strook ageyn hym sodeyn & violent:

His sonis two in Affrik were\* first slayn,  
 He of his lymys wex feeble & impotent.  
 With a consumpcioun his entrailles brent, 2896

And bi an agu, contynuel of feruence,  
 He was supprised bi strook of pestilence.

He lost his  
 wealth, his kin,  
 his wife and  
 friends; his  
 victories were  
 forgotten, his  
 name eclipsed,  
 and he died  
 in misery.

Al his tresour [Fortune] hath fro hym take,  
 His proude port & his worldli glorie; 2900

His kyn, his freendis & wif hath hym forsake,

His conquest dirk & put out of mæmorie:

His name clipped of al his old victorie.  
 And as he gan in pouert & distresse, 2904

So he made an eende in wrechidnesse.

Men expect to  
 see a sudden  
 fall after a  
 rapid and  
 dishonest  
 ascent.

Hasti risyng, & thrifft that is sodeyne,  
 And surmountyng bi violent rauyne,  
 And extort poweer, may for a tyme atteyne 2908

In riche chaier of lordshipe for to shyne.

Sodeyn ascendyng doth sodenli declayne;

And bi vntrouthe, wher-euer ther be encres,

Men waite of custum a sodeyn disencres. 2912

2876. Hir] His R. 2883. The] Ther B, R, J, P.

2886. Vengable] Vengabli B, R, J, P. 2894. were] was B.

2895. Inpotent R. 2897. Agwe R. 2899. Fortune] om. R, J.

2901. &] his H. 2903. His] he H. 2904. &] in H.

2907. rauyne] Rapyne H, R 3, H 5.

2909. chaier] chaar H — for] om. H. 2911. ther] om. R.

Of Agathodes men may exaample take,  
 What is the eende of eueri fals tiraunt.  
 Wrong clymbyng up dop a foul eende make:  
 For a sesoun thouth tirauntis be puissant,  
 Fortune to them yeueth no lenger graunt;  
 But whan thei sitte on hir wheel most roiall,  
 Bi vnwar chaung to haue a sodeyn fall.

Agathocles  
 is a good  
 example.

2916

Agothodes was firste a symple man,  
 Brouht forth in myscheeff and in pouerte,  
 Sone of a pottere, his stori telle can,  
 Bi vicious lyuyng cam to gret dignite,  
 Of alle folk hatid for his cruelte,  
 Clamb fro pouert up to gret richesse,  
 Maad poore ageyn, deied in wrechidnesse.

2920 The son of a  
 potter, he rose  
 to great wealth  
 and dignity  
 through vicious  
 living, and died  
 in wretched-  
 ness.

2924

## [Lenvoye]

**T**HIS tragedie sheweth a figure  
 Bothe bi stori & bi auctorite,  
 How man and beeste & euery creature  
 Tarageth the stok of his natyuite:  
 Herbe of the roote, & ech frut of his tree,  
 For bothe of vertu & also of outrage  
 Folweth sum tech or tast of the lynage.

2928 This tragedy  
 shews how  
 every creature  
 takes after his  
 parent's stock  
 for better or  
 for worse.

2932

Agathodes, bi record of scripture,  
 Born of lough bed, brouht foorth in pouerte,  
 Yit Fortune made hym to recure  
 Vp to hih estat from ful lough degre.  
 His resoun blent with sensualite,  
 Forgat hymselff, to speke in pley<sup>n</sup> langage,  
 Thoruh a fals tech that cam from his lynage.

2936 Agathocles,  
 born of low  
 bed, rose  
 to high estate  
 and forgot  
 himself  
 in consequence  
 of his base  
 lineage.

2940

Ther is a difference of colours in peynture,\*  
 On table or wal, as men alday may see;  
 Tween gold & gold, atween bis & asure:  
 Al is nat gold that shyneth briht, parde;  
 Sum noble is fals that hath ful gret beute, —  
 Lat men bewar of countirfet coignage,  
 Techchis eschewyng of cherlissh low lynage.

2944 There is a  
 difference  
 between gold  
 and gold and  
 smalt and  
 azure. All is  
 not gold that  
 glitters,

2913. Agathocles P. 2918. most] *om.* H, R 3, P.  
 2922. his] the R. 2930. his] *om.* H.  
 2941. peynture] picture B, J, R, P.  
 2943. atween] tween R.

nor may a kite  
fly with royal  
eagles.

Sum man forthred of sodeyn auenture, 2948  
Set in a chaier of roial dignite,  
Wenyng his empire euer sholde endure,  
Neuer to be troubled with non aduersite:  
With roial egles a kite may nat flee, 2952  
A iay may chatre in a goldene cage,  
Yit euer sum tech mut folwe of his lynage.

Gentle blood is  
merciful, but  
boors are  
always cruel,  
following the  
nature of their  
churlish birth.

Gentil blood of his roial nature  
Is euer enclyned to merci & pite, 2956  
Wher of custum thes vileyns do ther cure,  
Bi ther vsurpid & extort fals pouste  
To be vengable bi mortal cruelte,  
Thoruh hasti fumys of furious corage, 2960  
Folwying the techchis of ther vileyn lynage.\*

O mighty  
Princes, let  
Agathocles be  
your worldly  
mirror; avoid  
his example, as  
your royal blood  
requires of you.

O myhti Princis, your noblesse doth assure,  
Your passious resteth with tranquillite,  
Seeth how ther is no mene nor mesure, 2964  
Wher a tiraunt cachcheth the souereyntel  
Let Agathodes your worldli merour bee,  
Teschewe the traxis of his froward passage,  
As roiall blood requereth of your lynage. 2968

[How Cassander slouh the wif of Alisaundre &  
hercules hir sone/ and Antipater slouh his moder  
& of other moordres.]<sup>1</sup>

After the death  
of Agathocles,  
twelve men  
and women  
appeared before  
Bochas; and the  
first

THE grete myschevys\* of Fortunys miht,[p. 244]  
The woful fallis from hir wheel in deede  
Of princis, princessis, who-so looke ariht,  
Been lamentable & doolful for to reede. 2972  
But for al that, Bochas doth proceede  
In his rehersaile, remembryng thus hym-selue,  
To hym appeered of men & women twelue.

was Bersane,  
wife of  
Alexander the  
Great.

Aftir the deth of kyng Agathodes, 2976  
Ther cam toforn hym worthi queenis tweyne:  
The firste of them was callid Bersanes,  
And of hir myscheef gan to hym compleyne,  
Wiff to Alisaundre, the stori list nat feyne, 2980

2950. his] hir H. 2954. tech] om. H. 2960. forious R.

2961. lynage] langage B.

2963. resteth] wrestith H, R 3, H 5, rest P.

2969. myschevys] myscheeff B, J, R, P — miht] aventure R.

2974. thus remembryng H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 99 verso.

The myhti kyng, grettest vnder sunne,  
Which bi conquest al this world hath wonne.

Wiff unto hym\* was this Bersanes,\*  
Bi his lyue, as maad is menciou[n],  
Which with hir sone, named Hercules,  
Wer bi Cassander brouht to destruccioun.  
And of ther\* deth this was thoccasioun,  
Cassander dradde that Bersanes the queen  
Wolde with hir sone on hym auengid been

2984 She and her  
son Hercules  
were slain by  
Cassander, who  
feared their  
vengeance

For his tresouns, which he toforn hath wrouht  
On Alisaundre & on his lynage;  
And specialli, yiff that she were\* brouht  
To Macedoine for hir auauntage,  
With hir sone, that was but yong of age,  
Cassander thouhte & dradde, as I haue told,  
Thei wolde auenge his tresouns wrouhte of old.

2988 for his treason  
to Alexander,

He caste afforn\* of malis causeles,  
This Cassander, most fals in his werkyng,  
That yif this kniht, this yonge Hercules,  
Sone of Alisaundre, bi record of writyng,  
In Macedoyne wer take & crownid kyng,  
How that he wolde of equite & riht  
His fadris deth auengen lik a kniht.

2992  
3000 Cassander did  
not want  
Hercules to  
become king  
of Macedon,

Which thyng teschewe Cassander gan prouide,  
And bi fals fraude was nat rek[e]les;  
But on a day (he list nat longe abide)  
Slouh first the que[n], this said[e] Bersanes,  
And thanne hir sone Icallid Hercules.  
Thus bi Cassander, of moordre cropp & roote,  
Thei moordred wern; ther was non othir boote.

3004 so he first  
murdered  
Bersane and  
then her son,

This cruelte myht[e] nat suffise  
Vnto Cassander, be record of scripture;  
But lik a tiraunt in vengable wise  
He dede hem burie, bi froward auenture,  
Wher no man sholde knowe ther sepulture.  
And thus, alas, which pite is to reede,  
He moordred foure out of oon kynreede.

3012 and, like a  
tyrant,  
ordained that  
they should  
be buried in  
unknown  
graves.

2981. sunne] þe sonne H.

2983. unto hym] to Alisaundre B, R, J, P — Bersanes] Bersabes B.

2987. ther] hir B, J, R, P. 2992. were] was B.

2997. afforn] of afforn B. 2998. fals in his] falsli B, J.

3011. cruelte] om. H — nat] nat enuh H.



- He gave  
Alexander  
poison and slew  
Olympias,  
Bersane and  
Hercules.
- To Alisaundre he mynistrid the poisoun,  
Slouh the queen callid Olympiades,  
And of hatreede bi ful fals tresoun, 3020  
As I haue tolde, he slouh queen Bersanes,  
Wif to Alisaundre, mooder to Hercules,  
Which in youthe, bi Bochas rehersyng,  
In Macedoyne was lik to haue been kyng. 3024
- Afterwards he  
killed Queen  
Roxana, another  
wife of  
Alexander, and  
her two young  
sons.
- Aftir al this he koude nat lyue in pes,  
But euer redi sum tresoun for to do,  
Slouh eek the queen[e] callid Roxanes 3028  
Vpon a day, & hire yonge sone[s] too.  
And she was wiff to Alisaundre also,  
Cassander dreedyng, in his oppenyoun,  
List thei wolde venge [hem] upon his fals tresoun.
- His wife  
was called  
Thessalonica,  
and she had a  
son, Antipater,
- Thus euer he lyued in moordre, sorwe & striff; 3032  
Bi weie of fraude cam al his ences,  
And, as I fynde, how he hadde a wiff,  
And she was callid Thesalonices.  
And as this stori remembreth dout[e]les, 3036  
A sone thei hadde born atween hem tweyne,  
To slen his mooder which aftir dede his peyne.
- who compassed  
her death be-  
cause she  
loved his brother  
better than she  
loved him.
- Shortly [to] passe, myn auctour writ non othir,  
Antipater was hir sones name; 3040  
And because that she loued his brother  
Bettir than hym, he, to his gret diffame,  
Compassed hir deth, the stori seith the same,  
Natwithstondyng tappese his cruelte 3044  
She axed merci knelyng on hir kne.
- With disordered  
garments and  
face bedewed  
with tears, she  
begged in vain  
for mercy.
- Hir brestes open, white & softe as silk,  
Al bedewed with teres hir visage,  
Requered meekli at reuerence of the milk 3048  
With which he was fostred in yong[e] age,  
For taue merci & tappese his rage,  
And taccepte goodli hir praieere,  
To saue the lyff of his mooder deere. 3052
- He was as  
revengeful and  
cruel as his  
father. No  
good branch  
springs from  
cruel blood.
- But al for nouht; he herde hir neueradeel: [p. 245]  
He was to hire, surmountyng al mesure,  
Lik his fadir vengable & cruel.  
I trowe it was youe hym of nature; 3056

3025. nat] na H. 3027. Roanes H, R 3.

3036. as] om. J—this] the R, H 5. 3046. sofft &amp; white H.

3047. hir] off hir R. 3048. at] at the R.

For bi record of kynde & eek scripture,  
Seeld or neuer no braunche that is good  
Spryngeth of custum out of cruel blood.

Of hir deth[e] cause ther was non other,  
That Antipater slouh his mooder deere,  
But for she loued Alisaundre his\* brother  
Bettir than hym, the cronicle doth us lere.  
Which Alisaundre, yif ye list to heere,  
Hadde in his socour, I fynde be writyng,  
Demetrius, that was of Asie kyng.

3060 Alexander,  
Antipater's  
brother, was  
rescued by  
Demetrius, an  
Asian king;  
and after  
Lysimachus,  
3064

Thesalonices was in this while ded  
Bi Antipater, [s]he most infortunat,  
Bathed in hir blood, hir sides wer maad red,  
Withoute compassioun of hir hih estat.  
And hir too sonis lyuyng at debat,  
Til Lysymachus, that prefect was of Trace,  
Them reconciled ech to othirs grace.

3068 prefect of  
Thrace, had  
reconciled the  
two brothers,

Whan Demetrius knew of ther accord, —  
God wot the sothe, he nothyng was fayn;  
But bi his fraude, the stori berth record,  
That Alisaundre maliciousli was slayn,  
This while Antipater stondyng in noun certeyn,  
Til he be sleihte of Lysymachus  
Was moordred aftir, the stori tellith thus.

3076 Demetrius by  
his fraud caused  
Alexander to be  
slain, and  
afterwards  
Antipater was  
murdered by  
Lysimachus.

To write the processe and the maner howh  
That Lysimachus bi fraudulent werkyng  
His sone in lawe Antipater thus slouh, —  
Fals couetise was cause of al this thyng;  
And Demetrius took on hym to be kyng  
Of Macedoyne, remembrid tyme & date,  
Whan bothe brethre wer passed into fate.

3080 Demetrius then  
became king of  
Macedonia.

Duryng this moordre & al this mortal striff,  
In this processe lik as it is founde,  
Of Antipater Erudice the wiff,  
Douhtir of Seleuchus, was in cheynys bounde,  
Cast in prisoun dirk, hidous & profounde;  
And for a while I leue hir ther sojourne,  
And to Demetrius I will ageyn retourne.

3088 During this  
time Eurydice,  
Antipater's  
wife, was in  
prison, where  
I'll let her  
remain, and  
return to  
Demetrius,  
3092

3058. Seelden R. 3062. his] hir B. 3068. she] he J, R, H.  
3078. This] That R — no certeyn R 3, P.  
3086. Macedonye R. 3087. into] onto R.

Which made hymself[e] to be crownid kyng  
Of Macedoyne, thoruh his gret puissaunce. 3096  
But to destroie his purpos in werkyng,  
Ther wer thre princis notable in substaunce,  
Confederat & of oon alliaunce,  
Echon assentid, for short conclusioun, 3100  
To brynge Demetrius to destruccioun.

against whom  
Ptolemy,  
Seleucus,  
Lysimachus and  
King Pyrrhus  
of Epirus  
formed a league.

Oon the firste was worthi Tholome,  
Kyng of Egipt, in armis ful famous. 3104  
Othir tweyne, the stori ye may see,  
Callid Seleuchus, & next Lysymachus,  
And of Cipre kam the kyng Pirthus,  
Lord of [the] prouynce; & as it is eek founde,  
Thei made hem strong Demetry to confounde. 3108

They deprived  
him of his  
kingdom and  
put him in  
prison, and, so  
far as I know,  
he never  
appeared again.

Shortli to telle, with ther apparailles,  
Of Macedoyne thei dede hym first depriue;  
Cam upon hym with foure strong batailles,  
That he was neuer so ouer-set his lyue: 3112  
Take of Lisymachus, the stori doth descryue,  
Cheyned in prisoun, of his liff in doute,  
For I nat fynde that euer he issued oute.

[Off the too prefectys/ Penestes and Amantas.]<sup>1</sup>

Peucestas of  
Babylon and  
Amyntas of  
Bactria

**N**EXT in ordre Penestes dede appeere, 3116  
Whilom prefect of grete Babiloun;  
And with hym cam Amyntas\* eek ifeere,  
Another prefect, as maad is menciou[n],  
Which Bactrie\* hadde in his possessioun,\* 3120  
A gret prouynce youe hym bi iugement,  
Mid of Asia toward the occident.

were assigned for  
their worthinesse  
to watch over  
the safety of  
Alexander the  
Great.

Thes said[e] tweyne, for ther worthynesse  
And for ther manhod in actis marcial, 3124  
Assigned wern bi dilligent bisynesse  
To waite and keepe in especiall

3101. Demetry H.

3106. Cipre] Epirus P — the] om. H — Pirrus P.

3107. &] om. J, P. 3108. Demetrius P.

3116. Peucestes P.

3118. Amyntas] Amantas B, R, J.

3120. Bactrie is spelled Battrie in B, R, H, J, the c formed like t.  
— possessioun] suspecioun B, R, J — Bactrie] the Bactrians P.

3123. ther] the R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 100 recto.

Vpon the mageste in his estat roiall  
Of Alisaundre, for trust as chaumbirleyns, 3128  
Ageyn thassaut & dreed of al foreyns.

Afftir whos deth, for synguler guerdoun  
Made prefectis bothe thei wer in deede,  
As ye han herd; the ton in Babilon, 3132  
The tother of Bactrie, the stori ye may reede.  
Yit in quiete thei myhte hem nat posseede,  
For Seleuchus gan a werre ageyn [hem] make,  
That thei wer fayn ther lordshipis to forsake. 3136

Made prefects  
after his death,  
they were  
warred on by  
Seleucus and  
lost their  
provinces.

[How Sandrodoctus born of lowe degre cherisshed  
robbours & theuys.]<sup>1</sup>

OTHER prefectis ther wern also I fynde, [p. 246]  
Which heeld the people in ful gret seruage,  
In Macedoyne & in outhur Ynde,  
Til Sandrodoctus, a man of lough lynage, 3140  
Caste he wolde redressen ther outrage,  
Of entent poore people to restore  
To ther fraunchises, that pleynd on hem sore.\*  
Sandrodoctus, auctour of this werkyng, 3144  
Behihte the people thoruhout al contres,  
Whan he be sleithe was c[o]rownid kyng,  
Them to restore to ther libertes.  
But whan he hadde resceyued thes dignites, 3148  
Al his behestis, maad with a fair visage,  
Turned, as thei fōnd, to thraldam & seruage.  
Thus whan a wrech is set in hih estat,  
Or a begger brouht up to dignite, 3152  
Ther is non so proud[e], pompous nor elat,  
Non so vengable nor ful of cruelte,  
Void of discrecioun, mercy & pite;  
For cherlissh blood seelde doth recure 3156  
To be gentil be weie of his nature.

There were  
other prefects  
who oppressed  
the people, and  
Sandrodoctus,  
a man of low  
birth, who  
became

king by craft,  
promised to  
restore them  
their freedom.  
But he did  
not keep his  
word.

No one is so  
proud and full  
of cruelty as a  
beggar set in  
high estate.

3133. of] in P.

3135. a] om. H, R 3, P, H 5. 3136. lordshipp H.

3137. wer ther also R.

3140. Sandrocottus P. 3143. on he so sore B.

3145. thoruhout] thoruh R — al] be H, of al P.

3146. corownid] crownid MSS. except H 5 coronnyd.

3152. up] om. H, R 3. 3156. shurlych H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 100 verso.



For a time a  
churl may feign  
gentility, but  
like a serpent  
under flowers he  
will sting in  
the end.

He may dissymule & for a tyme feyne,  
Countirfete with a fair visage,  
Out of oon hood[e] shewe facis tweyne, 3160  
Contrari of herte, double of his langage,  
Stille of his port, smothe of his passage,  
Vnder flour[e]s lik a serpent dare,  
Til he may styng; & than he wil nat spare. 3164

Sandrocottus  
harassed his  
neighbours and  
created all  
manner of  
disturbances.

And euer lik of his condiciouns  
Was Sandrodoctus, set up in hih estat;  
Vexed peeples, troubled regeouns,  
Set cites & touns at gret debat: 3168  
Whos gouernaunce was infortunat,  
As it was seyn & founde at al[le] preues,  
Cherished no man but robbours & fals theuys.

He came to  
be king through  
a marvel.

And to declare how he cauhte hardynesse 3172  
And occasioun peeplis to gouerne,  
Bi a pronostik, which I shal expresse,  
Riht merueilous & vnkouth to discerne,  
Which was this, as I shal telle as yerne, 3176  
Riht wonderful & vnkouth for to heere;  
And it was this, yif ye list to lere:

A poor man of  
India called  
Pracatales  
trespassed  
against King  
Venandrus, who  
sought to  
put him to  
death.

Ther was a man callid Pracatales,  
Born in Ynde, which of his lyuyng 3180  
Was wonder poore, cam but seelde in pres,  
Because he hadde trespacid in o thyng  
Ageyn Venandrus, that was that tyme kyng,  
Comaundyng to sleen\* hym anon riht; 3184  
But he escaped, the stori seith be fliht.

But his swift  
feet helped  
him to escape,  
and while he  
slept in his  
weariness  
beside a well,  
a lion came  
and licked the  
sweat from  
his face.

God hadde youe hym of [his] feet suyftnesse,  
Bi mene wherof he saued hym fro daungeer,  
Thoruh long trauaile fill in werynesse, 3188  
And [to] refresshe hym, beside a welle cleer  
He lay slepyng, that face & al his cheer  
Dropped of soot; a leoun cam forbi,  
Likked his face, as seith the stori. 3192

When he  
awoke, the  
lion went his  
way to the  
forest without  
doing him any  
harm.

With which affray the man anon awook,  
And sodenli left up his visage;  
The leoun ros, sofftli his weie took  
Toward the forest, dede hym no damage, 3196

3165. euer] even H. 3170. at] in R. 3171. fals] om. R.  
3179. Pracatales P. 3180. of] in H.  
3184. sleen] fleen B, R, fien J. 3185. fliht] sleiht R.  
3186. his] om. R. 3189. to] om. R. 3193. awook] he woke R.

Forȝat his felnesse and his cruel rage.  
Of which pronostik gan thoccasioun  
Wherof Sandrodoctus took an oppynyoun,

Caste and thouhte in his fantasie,  
Sithe that the leoun is beeste most roiall,  
Which nat disdeyned hymselff[e] to applie  
To likke the face of a man rurall,  
In his nature to shewe hym bestiall,—  
He dempte as weel that it was sitting  
To take on hym thestat to be a kyng.

His oppynyoun of resoun was riht nouht;  
For wher the leoun lefft his cruelte,  
He in contrary wex proud in hert & thouht,  
Void of merci, bareyn of pite.  
For whan that he was set in dignite,  
Brouht from a wrech to domynacioun,  
Ageyn nature he played the leoun.

Sumwhile\* a leoun forgeteth his\* felnesse,  
Wher-as the wolff wil natureli deuoure;  
So roial blood hath routhe, of gentillesse,  
On poore pleyntiffs to helpe hem & socoure,  
Wher-as a tiraunt of nature doth laboure,  
Whan he hath poweer, cachchyng auantage  
To robbe [his] subiectis & spoille hem be pillage. 3220

Sandrodoctus, thus born of low kynreede, [p. 247]  
In hih estat bi Fortune whan he stood,  
Gan make hym strong & vengable in deede:  
With noumbre of robbours, furious and wood, 3224  
Cast hym destroie al the gentil blood  
That was in Ynde, & bi his ordynaunce  
Slen al ther prefectis that hadde gouernaunce.

And with the comouns whan he was maad strong, 3228  
And gan the maner of ther deth deuise,  
Lik a fals tiraunt, al-thouh he dede wrong  
Ageyn his lordis whan he gan arise,  
An olifaunt cam in ful unkouth wise,  
Hym obeiede, which was a gret[e] wonder, 3232  
Whan ther batailes wer nat ferre assonder.

3200 Sandrocottus  
heard this story  
and thought  
that since a  
royal lion could  
lick the face of  
a rustic,

3204

3208 there was no  
reason why he,  
another poor  
man, should not  
become king.  
Only instead of  
being merciful  
and gentle, he  
was proud and  
cruel.

3212

3216 Sometimes a  
lion forgets to  
be fierce, but  
wolves and  
tyrants are  
always  
ravenous.

3224 Sandrocottus  
became strong  
with the help  
of robbers and  
the common  
people,

and, riding on  
a wild elephant,  
that, strange  
to say,  
obeyed him like  
a tame beast,

3232

3198. began H. 3205. as] om. J.

3210. & bareyn H, R 3.

3214. Sumwhile] Sumtyme B, R — his] al B, J, P, as R.

3216. of] on R, J, H, P, & R 3. 3223. vengeably H.

3231. gan] did H. 3232. unkouth] humble H.

slew all the  
prefects and  
gentle blood  
of India.

Thouh he was wilde, the stori seith the same,  
Sandrodoctus leep upon his side, 3236  
And on his bak, as on a beeste tame,  
Toward the bataile anon he gan to ride,  
Was ther capteyn that day & ther guide,  
With his robbours, as it is maad[e] mynde, 3240  
Slouh al the prefectis & gentil blood of Ynde.

[How Seleuchus the mighty prince was slayn bi  
the grete Tholome kyng of Egipt.]<sup>1</sup>

After  
Sandrocottus,  
Seleucus, son  
of Antiochus,  
appeared  
complaining to  
Bochas. He  
was a favourite  
of Alexander  
and son of  
Queen Laodice,

**T**HAN cam Seleuchus to Bochas compleinyng,  
A mihti prince & a ful manli kniht,  
Sone of Antiochus, the grete famous kyng. 3244  
Which\* Seleucus, for wisdam & for myht,  
Was most fauoured in Alisaundris siht,  
Born of a princesse, the cronicle ye may seen,  
Cald Laoudice the grete famous queen. 3248

who dreamt  
the night she  
conceived that  
Apollo gave her  
a ring

The berthe of hym straunge & merueillous:  
For his mooder upon the same niht  
That she conceyued drempte & thouhte thus, 3252  
As it semed pleykli in hir siht,  
Of gret Appollo, the heuenli god most briht,  
How she the tyme of hir conceyuyng  
Resceyued that niht of gold a riche ryng.

in which  
a precious stone  
with an anchor  
engraved on it  
was set. Apollo  
commanded her  
to give the  
ring to the  
child;

In which[e] ryng was set a precious stoon, 3256  
Youe vnto hir for a gret guerdoun,  
Graue with an ankir, hir comaundyng anon,  
Afftir the berthe withoute dilacioun,  
To yiue the ryng, of hool affeccioun, 3260  
To Seleuchus, wherbi in especiall  
He sholde excelle in actis marciall.

and next  
morning, after  
her son  
was born,  
the ring was  
found in her  
bed, and she  
put it away for  
safe keeping.

The same morwe aftir the child was born,  
Withynne hir bed was founde a riche ryng, 3264  
With al the toknys rehersed heer-tofor,  
The anker graue, lik in eueri thyng.  
Which that the queen[e] took in hir keepyng,  
And of entent[e] for his\* auantage, 3268  
Kept it secre til he cam to age.

3236. upon] on H.

3238. anon he gan] he proudly gan H, R 3, H 5.

3245, 46 are transposed in B and R.

3245. Which] With B, J, For R.

3263. the] this H. 3268. his] hir B, H, J, R 3, H 5, her P.

3269. to] till H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 100 recto.

Anothir merueile befill also withall:

This [childe] Seleuchus (which was a wonder thyng)

Hadde enpreentid eek in especiall

Vpon his thih an anker & a ryng;

So hadde all, bi record of writyng,

Such carectis, the stori doth termyne,\*

That aftir hym wer bor[e]n of that lyne.

Another marvel  
was that an  
anchor and a  
ring were  
imprinted on  
Seleucus'  
thigh.

3272

3276

Whan Seleuchus, as maad is mencionn,

The tendre yeeres hadde of his age ronne,

And cam to yeeris of discrecioun,

He bi this ryng ful many lond hath wonne.

Whos knihtli fame shon sheene as [a] sonne,

He weel auised, hardi [&] of gret myht,

Tyme of Alisandre holde oon the beste kniht.

When he be-  
came of age he  
won many lands  
with the help  
of this ring

3280

In werre and armes he his tyme hath spent;

Brouht al Ynde [on]to subieccioun,

Gat al the kyngdames nih of the orient,

Heeld hem longe in his pocioun.

But heer, alas, Bochas makth mencionn,

Al his victories, that dede in honour shyne,

With sodeyn chaung wer turned to ruine.

3284 and conquered  
India and  
many  
kingdoms  
of the Orient.

3288

For whan Seleuchus was most victorious,

Hadde al Inde conquered in substaunce,

Atween hym & kyng Lysymachus,

Of whom tofore is maad[e] remembraunce,

Began a werre & a gret distaunce.

And as thei mette with ther apparailles,

In a gret feeld ordeyned ther batailles,

3292 But a sudden  
change turned  
all to ruin,  
when he went  
to war against  
Lysimachus.

3296

On Lysymachus fill the disconfiture.

Wheroff Seleuchus, glad in especiall,

Dempte his wynnyng cam nat of nature,

But bynfluence verray celestiaall,—

Gan waxe proud in his estat roiall,

Nat supposyng in his victorious stall,

Of his myscheeuys that sholde aftir fall.

3300 He was  
victorious at  
first, and  
thought in his  
pride that no  
one could  
defeat him,

3304

3271. childe] *om.* R, P.

3275. termyne] *determyne* B, R, P.

3278. age ronne] *yers* Ironne H.

3281. a] *om.* R, J, P, be R 3.

3282. &] *om.* R, J, P, R 3. 3285. unto] to R, P.

3289. that] *be* H. 3290. to] onto R.

3300. nature] *aventur* H, *auenture* P, H 5, *auentur* R 3.



and yet he was  
soon afterwards  
slain by  
Ptolemy,  
Lysimachus'  
brother-in-law.

For as the processe declareth onto vs, [p. 248]

How of Egipt the grete Tholome,  
Brother-in-lawe to Lysymachus,  
Fill on Seleuchus bi ful gret cruelte, 3308  
Slouh hym at myscheeff, the stori ye may see.  
Loste his liffe, as maad is mencionn,  
In Macedoyne, the myhti regioun.

Ptolemy was  
one of the  
heirs of  
Alexander and  
the founder of  
the Ptolemaic  
dynasty.

And it is knowe of antiquite 3312  
Bi rehersaile of these olde auctours,  
That this forseid gret[e] Tholome  
Was Talisaundre oon of thenheritours,  
Kyng of Egipt, ther regnyng in his flours. 3316  
Afftir whos name, descendyng doun be grees,  
Wer alle the kynges callid Tholomes.

He had three  
children,  
Ceraunus,  
Philadelphus  
and Arsinoe.

As I fynde, touchyng his lynage,  
Bi procreacioun he hadde childe thre: 3320  
The firste of hem, to speke in pleyn langage,  
Inamed was Ceramyus Tholome,  
Next Philadelphus, a douhtir Arcynoe,  
That weddid was birfadres consentyng 3324  
To Lysymachus of Macedoyne kyng.

[How the too sonys of queen Arcynoe were bi ther  
moders brother traitoursly slayn and she exiled.] <sup>1</sup>

Arsinoe then  
came before  
Bochas, her  
face wet with  
tears, com-  
plaining her  
sorrows.

AND thus remembred in bookes [that been] olde,  
Deth of Seleuchus wrouht bi Tholome,  
Vnwarli slayn, toforn as I haue told, 3328  
Next in ordre cam Arsynoe  
To Iohn Bochas bi gret aduersite,  
Al with teres bedewed hir visage,  
And gan compleyne the constreynt of hir rage. 3332

She had two  
sons, Lysimachus  
and Philip.

This mihti queen, this said Arsynoe,  
Hadde sonis tweyne ful famous of renoun:  
The ton Lysymachus, excellyng of beute,  
The tothir Phelipp, as maad is mencionn. 3336  
And al hir ioie and delectacioun,  
Hir worldli blisse — ther is no mor to seyne —  
Was hooli set upon thes childe tweyne.

3320. children R. 3322. Cytomyus H.

3326. thus] om. H, R 3 — in] bi R — that been] om. R, J, P, H 5.

MS. J. leaf 101 recto.

- For bi thoccasioun of ther gret fairnesse,  
 Men delited gretli them to see,  
 Namli women, the stori doth expresse;  
 And ther mooder, this queen Arsinoe,  
 Stood in gret hope that thei sholde bee  
 Mihti kyngis bi iust successioun,  
 In Macedoyne the myhti regioun,  
 Onli be tittle of ther fadres riht.  
 Which to hir herte gaf ful gret gladnesse,  
 For she dempte that non other wiht  
 To succede sholde ha[ue] non interesse;  
 But Fortune, the blynde fals goddessse,  
 Disposed so for thes\* childre tweyne,  
 That non of them ther purpos sholde atteyne.
- For whan ther fader Lisymachus was slayn,  
 The saide queen callid Arsinoe,  
 To saue hir lyff koude non othir gayn,  
 But with hir sonis feerfulli to flee  
 Into Cassandre, a myhti strong cite,  
 Onli for dreed of oon Antigonus  
 Which them pursued, the stori tellith us.\*
- But the brother of queen Arsinoe,  
 Callid Ceramius rescued hir partie  
 Geyn Antigonus, ye may the stori see;  
 Yit in his herte he hadde gret envie,  
 Al-be that thei wer nih of his allie,  
 That hire too sonis sholde kyngis bee  
 Of Macedoyne, & fegne in that contre.
- For he was set onli of couetise  
 To be crowned in Macedoyne kyng;  
 And of fals\* tresoun, the stori doth deuise,  
 Them to deceyue, this was his werkyng:  
 First to the queen ful humbeli knelyng  
 He made promys vnder gret surete,  
 In Macedoyne she sholde crownid be.
- And hir childre, so fair of ther visage,  
 Sholde be keped\* vndir gouernaunce  
 Vnto tyme that thei kam to age.
- 3340 whom she hoped would succeed to the throne of Macedonia,  
 3344  
 3348 taking great pleasure in the thought.  
 3352  
 3356 But when their father was killed, Arsinoe fled with her two sons from one Antigonus, who pursued them to Cassandreia,  
 3360 where they were rescued by Ceraunus,  
 3364  
 3368 who resolved to be king of Macedon himself, and slyly promised Arsinoe that she should be crowned queen,  
 3372  
 3376 advising her to keep her children in tutelage until they became of age.
3346. the] bat H. 3350. enteresse R. 3351. the] bat H.  
 3352. thes] ther B, R. 3357. ferfull H. 3358. Cassandria P.  
 3360. us] thus B, R, J, R 3. 3362. Ceraunus P — hir] his H.  
 3363. be story ye may H. 3370. fals] his fals B, R, J.  
 3374. she] he R. 3376. keped] kept B.

And for to put hir in mor assuraunce,  
 Ceramyus swoor (God yiue hym sori chaunce!)  
 He purposed, for al his fals werkynge, 3380  
 To crowne hir queen & make hir sones kynges.

He swore before  
 all the gods  
 that he would  
 marry her and  
 make her his  
 queen,

Took alle the goddis ther onto witnesse  
 And swoor ageyn[e], with a pleyn visage,  
 Onto the quen, of fraude & doubilnesse, 3384  
 His purpos was to haue hir in mariage,  
 Crowne hir queen to hir gret auantage.  
 Thus was he\* sworn, althouh he was hir brother;  
 Yit in herte God wot he thouhte another. 3388

and thus assured,  
 she allowed  
 him to enter  
 the city, and  
 met him with  
 great ceremony.

Vnder colour of this assuraunce [p. 249]  
 She leet hym entre Cassandre the cite,  
 Cam ageyn hym to doon hym mor plesaunce  
 With al hir lordis of hih & louh degre, 3392  
 Made the streetis hangid for to bee  
 With clothes of gold, & in solempne wise  
 To alle ther godis dede sacrefise.

Her two sons  
 wore royal  
 crowns and  
 went before  
 her down the  
 principal street  
 to receive their  
 uncle;

And thus he was resceyued solempneli; 3396  
 The day was halwed & holde festyual:  
 The queen for ioie ordeyned richeli  
 Hir too sonis, that were so faire in al,  
 To be crownid with crownes ful roialle, 3400  
 Goon afforn hire in the maister streete  
 Gloriousli ther vnkle for to meete.

and with  
 a friendly face  
 he embraced  
 them, although  
 purposing their  
 destruction.

With felenous herte vnder a freendli face  
 This Ceramyus, roote of al tresoun,  
 Gan his cosyns benigneli enbrace, 3404  
 Hym purposyng bi fals collusioun  
 To proceede to ther destruccioun.  
 And fynali, firste he dide his peyne 3408  
 The queen textile and slen hir childre tweyne.

He ordered the  
 queen to be  
 exiled, meaning  
 to murder her  
 sons; but she  
 saw what he  
 intended and  
 begged him  
 to be  
 merciful,

But or this tresoun was brouht to a preeff,  
 Whan the queen apparceyued his falsnesse  
 And sauh hir sonis brouht to such myscheeff, 3412  
 She coniured hym in hir mortal distresse  
 To haue pite of natural gentillesse,  
 Spare his cosyns, afforn hym wher thei stood,  
 Of roial merci, so nih born of his blood. 3416

3387. was he] he was B, R, J, R 3, H 5, P.

3396. solely R. 3411. apparceyued] parceyued H.

And with a cri passyng lamentable  
 She fill afforn hym swownyng onto grounde,  
 Lik as she hadde be verraili coupable,  
 Seyng hir sonis bleedyng *with* many wounde.  
 But al for nouht; ther was no merci founde.  
 For *with\** ther blood (this stori is nat feyned)  
 Hir garnement was doolfulli disteyned.

and fell to the  
 ground in a  
 swoon before  
 him.

3420

Hir faire face was soiled with ordure,  
 Hir goldene her was al to-torn & rent,  
 And lik a thrall this woful creature  
 With mortal weepyng hadde hir sihte blent.  
 And aftir that, I fynde how she was sent  
 To burie hir childre, for ther was no space,  
 Into an ile callid *Sammotrace*.

3424 But all without  
 avail. The  
 blood of her  
 sons stained  
 her garments,  
 her golden hair  
 was torn, and  
 she went blind  
 3428 for weeping.

Is any stori, whiche maketh mencioun  
 That a princesse of so hih degre  
 Fond so gret cause of lamentacioun?  
 She beyng douhtir to gret Tholome, —  
 Hir childre slayn be vengable cruelte,  
 And to beholde the deth most dolerous  
 Of hir husbonde callid *Lysymachus*.

3432 She buried her  
 sons in  
 Samothrace.  
 Is there any  
 story of a  
 princess of  
 such high  
 degree who  
 suffered so  
 much?  
 3436

She aftir banished in exil made hir eende,  
*With* sorewful compleynt hir lyff thus drawe along,  
 Til into fate hir sperit dede weende,  
 It is no dreded hir peynes wer ful strong.  
 And yif I sholde rehersen al the wrong  
 That she suffred, it sholde greeue sore,  
 Therfor of hir now I write no more.

3440 Afterwards she  
 died in exile.  
 It would be  
 too painful to  
 rehearse all  
 her wrongs.

3444

### Lenvoye.

**T**HIS tragedie sheweth an apparence  
 And a liknesse of feithful assuravnce,  
 Texite men to yiue fals credence  
 Vnto Fortunys froward variaunce.  
 Which cast hir baitis & anglis of plesaunce,  
 An hook hid vndir of vengable cruelte,  
 As this chapitle [hath] put in remembraunce  
 Of *Lysymachus* & of *Arsynoe*.

This tragedy  
 has to do with  
 the variance of  
 Fortune.

3448

3452

3420. many a H. 3422. with] which B. 3423. garment H.  
 3431. whiche] which pat H, R 3. 3437. callid] om. R.  
 3438. bansshed H, R.  
 3447. Texite] execute H. 3451. hath] om. R.



There is no  
greater evidence  
of worldly  
vicissitudes than  
to see princes  
suddenly  
brought to ruin.

Is ther any gretter euidence  
Of worldli trouble of worldli constaunce,  
Than seen princis from ther magnificence  
And from ther myhti roial [hih] puissaunce 3456  
Vnwarli brouht bi Fortune to myschaunce,  
And ouerwhelmyd from ther tranquillite?  
Seep heer a merour ful notable in substaunce  
Of Lisymachus & queen Arsynoe. 3460

The ring and  
anchor  
given to  
Seleucus by  
Apollo were  
of small  
assurance; and  
think of  
Lysimachus and  
Arsinoe!

The ryng, the anker of gret excellence  
Youe to Seleuchus for marcial suffisaunce,  
Whan Appollo be heuenli influence  
List with his mooder make his alliaunce, 3464  
Sent hym thes reliques of synguler aqueyntaunce,  
To sette his manhod in mor surete;  
But in al such quaueryng perseueraunce,\*  
Thynk on Lysymachus & on Arsynoe! 3468

Neither the  
vast treasures  
nor the subjects  
nor the  
regions of those  
who govern  
this world  
render them  
secure against  
Fortune.

The vnkout[h] tresours, the gold nor the dis-  
pence [p. 250]  
Of hem that han this world in gouernaunce,  
Nor al the subiectes, up rekned in sentence,  
Nor al the regiouns vnder ther obeissaunce, 3472  
Princis, princessis, with al ther attendaunce,  
May ageyn Fortune yiue hem no liberte;  
Who nat knoweth hir vnseur geri chaunce,  
Thynk on Lysymacus & on Arsynoe. 3476

Arsinoe and her  
children were  
slain by  
Ceraunus (bad  
luck to him!)  
who pretended  
friendship for  
them.

Hir childre and she slayn bi violence  
Of Ceramyus (God yiue hym sori chaunce!)  
That bi fals colour dide hir reuerfice  
And pretendid a maner obseruaunce, 3480  
The tresoun cloos of venymous purueiaunce,  
Purposed afforn toutraie hem all[e] thre:  
The childre slayn, which knewe no cheuisaunce,  
The mooder exiled, callid Arsynoe. 3484

Noble Princes,  
do not become  
estranged from  
one another or  
hide your  
rancour under a  
curtain of  
duplicitie.  
Remember this  
chapter of  
Lysimachus  
and Arsynoe.

Noble Princis, beeth war of hih prudence,  
Among your-silf that ther be no distaunce,  
Hideth no rancour of hatful violence  
Vndir a courtyn of double daliaunce; 3488  
Lik your herte shewe out your contenaunce,  
Void of dissymulyng &\* duplicite,

3456. hih] *om.* R. 3460. queen] of R. 3464. make his]  
maken H. 3467. perseueraunce] aqueyntaunce B, R, J.  
3468. 2nd on] off R, *om.* J. 3472. ther] *om.* R.  
3476. 2nd on] *om.* J, P. 3490. &] & of B.

Wisly weieth this chapitle in balaunce,  
Off Lisymachus and queen Arsynoe.

3492

## ¶ Explicit.

[How Ceramius of Macedony kyng that moordred  
his cosyns was slayn in bataile bi them [of]  
Fraunce.]<sup>1</sup>

THE noble poete Iohn Bochas, in his book  
Procedyng foorth, compleyneth of pite,  
With quaky[n]g hand whan he his penne took  
And gan to write the woful destyne,  
As ye han herd, of queen Arsynoe,  
And how Ceramius, the stori maketh mynde,  
Was to hir fals, traitour & vnkynde.

As John  
Bochas  
proceeded forth  
in his book,  
his hand  
trembled  
when he  
wrote the sad  
story of Queen  
Arsinoe.

3496

Of whos tresoun is maad a gret processe,  
And how he aftir was slayn in bataille,  
Punshed bi vengauce for his gret falsnesse,  
Lik as his stori maketh rehersaille.  
Which to remembre I cast me nat to faille,  
Folwyng myn auctour & proceede in writyng,  
How Ceramyus was slayn whan he was kyng.

3500 Ceraunus was  
afterwards  
slain in battle

3504

For whil that he bi his fals werkyng,  
In Macedoyne hadde gouernaile,  
Thre hundred thousand acountid be reknyng\*  
Wente out of Fraunce to conquere in Itaille;  
The hoost, departed in many strong bataille,  
Gat bi conquest thoruh ther hih renoun  
Ful many prouynce & many regioun.

3508 by the Gauls,  
after they had  
conquered  
Italy

3512

And as thei rood thoruh many gret contre, —  
This peple of Gaule in steel armyd cleen,\* —  
Thei foundid castellis & many strong cite:  
Toward Rome thei bilt Milan & Sene,  
Vpon T[h]alpies ther armour shon ful sheene;  
And sum of them up to Rome wente  
Be verray force, and the cite brente.

3516 and built  
Milan and  
Sienna.  
Their armour  
gleamed on  
the Alps; and  
some of them  
burnt Rome,  
and others  
went up the  
Ægean Sea to  
Pavonia.

3520

3509. reknyng] writyng B, R, J, P.

3510. in] om. R. 3514. contrees H.

3515. cleen] briht B, sheene R, J.

3516. Citees H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 102 recto.

Summe partid up to the Grekissh Se,  
 Hadde a custum to chese ther duellyng place  
 Bi augurie, as briddes dede flee;  
 Folwyng ther fliht[e], thei gan aftir trace, 3524  
 Holdyng ther way, *withynne* a litil space,  
 With myhti hand, the book doth specefie,  
 Thei cam tacontre callid Pauonye.

They were a  
 people of great  
 courage, and,  
 following  
 Hercules'  
 example,

This folk of Gaule, which is callid France, 3528  
 To conquere londis put hemsilff in pres,  
 As most notable peeple of puissaunce,  
 Folwyng thexample of ther knihtli ences  
 In ther ridyng, of worthi Hercules, 3532  
 Which was worsheped in actis marcial  
 Lik as a god, and callid inmortal.

they conquered  
 many countries.  
 When they  
 came to  
 Macedonia,

Thoruh grace of Fortune in ther cheualries  
 Conquered contres, alway fourth ridyng, 3536  
 Themsilff departyng in dyuers cumpanyes, —  
 Who them withstood thei consumed be brennyng.  
 Cam to Macedoyne wher Cerawm was kyng;  
 Of presumpcioun weenyng it sholde auaile, 3540  
 Out of ordynaunce he mette hem in bataile.

Ceraunus  
 fought them  
 in his pride,  
 although they  
 offered to treat  
 with him for  
 peace.

This Ceramius of outrage & of pride  
 Dempte hym able to meete *with* hem of France;  
 But for he was thoruh moordre an homycide, 3544  
 He lakked grace & poweer in substaunce.  
 Yit thei off Gaule, bi prudent gouernaunce,  
 Offred onto hym, thouth he was rek[e]lles,  
 With Macedonoys for to trete of pes. 3548

Defeated for  
 his presumption,  
 his head was  
 cut off and  
 set on a stake.

But of\* presumpcioun & malencolie [p. 251]  
 Ageyn his enmyes he the feeld hath take,  
 And disconfited anon was his partie:  
 His men gan fleen, & ha[ue] ther lord forsake; 3552  
 His hed smet off and set upon a stake.  
 But al his myscheeff was to lite in deede  
 To recompense his fraude & his falsheede.

But there is no  
 punishment  
 adequate for  
 murder.

Ther is no peyne ageyn so gret offense 3556  
 Mai be deuised in no book that men reede,  
 Equialent moordre to recompence,

3521. to] thoruh H, R 3, through H 5.

3523, 24 are transposed in B; correction indicated by scribe.

3534. Immortal H. 3538. thei] the R — be] with H, H 5.

3539. Ceraunus P. 3544. an] & R.

3549. of] for B, J, R. 3558. Equyualence R.

Duli to punshe so outraious a deede,  
 Of hym that made yonge childre bleede, 3560  
 As dede Ceraum, which of fals couetise  
 His cosyns slouh, as ye han herd deuise.

To thynke on moordre, it is to foul a thyng,  
 To God and man hatful & terrible: 3564  
 The infernal fraude, the deuellissh compassyng  
 To ech creature of nature is odible,  
 Which to redresse is an impossible.  
 O cursid Ceram, I leue thi stori heere, 3568  
 Thi name no more shal blotte my papeere!

It is too  
 foul a thing,  
 hateful and  
 terrible to God  
 and man.  
 Cursed  
 Ceraunus,  
 your name shall  
 no longer blot  
 my paper!

[How the prynce Belgius was disconfited and  
 brouht vnto nought.]<sup>1</sup>

A FFTIR this tiraunt, as ye ha[ue] herd be cas,  
 Slain in bataile, this traitour odious,  
 Anon in ordre cam to Iohn Bochas 3572  
 A myhti prince callid Belgius,  
 Dedli pale, with face furious,  
 Which compleynynd, among this woful pres,  
 His discomfiture doon be duk\* Sostenes. 3576

After  
 Ceraunus, a  
 prince called  
 Belgus  
 appeared,  
 complaining  
 with a furious  
 and distorted  
 face his  
 discomfiture  
 by Duke  
 Sosthenes.

This sodeyn myscheef greued his herte sore;  
 For al the folk that wer in his bataille  
 Wer put to fliht[e]. Bochas writ no more  
 Of his kniethod nor of his apparaille, 3580  
 Sauf onli this; he maketh rehersaille,  
 Of the Frensshe hōst, he tellith in certeyn,  
 How he was chose for a cheeff capteyn,

His sudden  
 misfortune  
 grieved him  
 sorely. Bochas  
 says no more  
 about him  
 than that  
 he was chosen  
 a chief captain  
 of the French  
 army; nor do  
 I find any other  
 notice of  
 Sosthenes,  
 save that he  
 was conquered  
 by Brennus.

And how he cam into the riche lond  
 Of Macedoyne with his peeple of Fraunce,  
 Til Sostenes the duk, with myhti hond,  
 Discounfited hym, brouht hym to myschaunce.  
 Of whom I fynde non other remembraunce, 3588  
 Saue whan he wende ta be\* most glorious,  
 He was outraied bi force of Brennyus.

3562. han] *om.* R. 3567. Inpossible R.

3576. duk] queen B, R — Sosthenes P.

3585. his] this H, R 3.

3589. ta be] taue be B, R 3, H 5, tauethe R, to haue ben P, taue  
 ben J.

3590. Brennus P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 102 verso.



[How Duk Brennyus delityng to robbe & spoile ended.]<sup>1</sup>

Brennus, king of Sens, was a conqueror who spared neither peoples nor gods, robbing all.

**T**HIS Brennyus, ful knihtli in werkyng,  
Which bi conquest gat many gret cite, 3592  
And, as I reede, of Sens he was kyng,  
Dispoilled regiouns & many gret contre,  
Robbed peeples of hih & low degre,  
Spared no goddis, but be violence 3596  
Took ther tresours; dede hem no reuerence.

The Greeks used to go to the temple of Apollo at Delphi to consult the oracle,

Ther was a temple gret and merueilous  
Bilt on a roche and on an hill off ston,  
Sacred Tappollo callid Delphicus, — 3600  
In al Grece so gret a god was non.  
And offte sithe the peeple wolde gon  
Vp to a theatre which that stood withoute,  
To haue ansuere of that thei stood in doute. 3604

where they had answer given them by a spirit of false deception.

Ther trust, ther hope was to that god applied,  
Hauyng to hym synguler affecciou, 3608  
As thouh he myhte haue holpe & magnefied  
And doon to hem gret consolacioun;  
For bi a sperit of fals decepcioun  
He gaff answeere of sondri questiouns  
To folk that cam fro dyuers regiouns.

Brennus had no desire to worship the gods of Greece; he only wanted to rob them of their treasures.

Kyng Brennyus hadde no fantasie, 3612  
In ther templis aftir ther paynym guise  
Nouthur to worshepe nor to magnefie  
Ther Grekissh goddis, to doon hem sacrefise;  
For in his herte he gan hem to despise, 3616  
Cauhte a ioie with al his fals robbours  
Them to despoile & robbe of ther tresours.

He promised to share the pillage with his men

Behihte his men, & seid in pleyn langage,  
That his desir and his entencioun 3620  
Was to be boti with them of such pillage  
As goddis hadde in ther pocessioun,  
And parte with hem for synguler guerdoun

3592. cite] cure R.

3593. Sens] Dens R, dens J — of Sens] since P — was] was made H, P.

3594, 95 are transposed in H. 3595. peeple J, people P.

3596. be] om. R.

3618. ther] the R.

3621. boti] bootyng R 3, botyng H 5, boting P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 102 verso.

For ther labour & ther gret trauailles  
That thei had hadde with hym in his batailles.

3624

He gaff his peeple a maner hardynesse,  
Made hem truste in gret multitude,  
Hauyng despiht of thynnocent symplesse  
Of his enmyes, because thei wer but rude.  
I meene tho folk, shortli to conclude,  
Which hadde in keepyng the ieweles precious  
Of gret Appollo callid Delphicus.

3628

and taught his  
people to trust  
in numbers, and  
despised the  
Delphian  
priests because  
they were rude  
and simple.

3632

The peeple also which was with Brennyus [p. 252]  
Hadde al the day dronke myhti wyne —  
To fille ther paunchis thei wer so desirous, —  
That thei forgat ther marcial doctrynes.  
Tascende the mounteyn feeble wer ther chynes,  
Ther hedis toltir & ther brayn gan faille,  
The temple alofte to spoille it or tassaille.

[p. 252]

3636

Brennus'  
soldiers  
were drunk,  
and feeble to  
climb the hill  
and assault the  
temple;

In ther ascendyng be weies that thei ches,  
Vpon the roche thei wer bete down;  
Preestis of the temple put hemsilff in pres —  
Oon bar a standard, a-nother a gret penoun —  
Clad in chesiples for hih deuocioun,  
And with ther other vnkouth apparailles,  
Bothe on the roche & lowe in ther batailles.

3640

and the priests,  
clad in  
chasubles,  
fought them  
bravely

3644

The peeple of Brennyus\* was incomparable,  
Spradde al the feeldis, the stori berth witnessse;  
But it is said of old & is no fable,  
That no diffence is [in] dronk[e]nesse.  
And wisdam failleth wher is gret excesse;  
And in a feeld[e], pleyntli to conclude,  
Victori alway stant nat in multitude.

3648

in spite of their  
great numbers;

3652

For thei wer set, Bochas doth deuise,  
Nat to knihthod but to fals outrage,  
To spoile and robbe be gredi couetise,  
And stuffe ther someres with outraious pillage;  
Furious raayne hath brouht hem in a rage, —  
And farweel knihthod & marcial noblesse  
Wher couetise is ladi & maistresse!

3656

for they were  
set not on  
knightly deeds  
but on robbery.

3660

3637. wer] was H.

3638. toltir J, R, toltir H 5, toltir (the r misformed) H — brayns  
H, braynes R 3 — ganto R.

3643. another] ano H. 3647. Brennyus B.

3651. wher] ther H. 3652. feeld] freende R.

3657. someres] om. R.

Besides  
Brennus the  
Gauls had  
two other  
leaders, Dukes  
Euridanus and  
Thessalonus.

Too myhti dukis wer with Brennyus,  
Which that wer[en] cheeff of his counsail.  
Manus\* the ton, the tothir Thesalorus,  
Which, as thei thouhte to ther gret auail, 3664  
Began a purpos, and it was disauail,  
To robbe the temple, the contre & ech toun,  
Which turnid aftir to ther confusioun.

Avarice  
strangles  
the prowess of  
many a worthy  
knight and  
turns nobility  
of heart into  
cowardice.

Thus auarice with stomak vnstaunchable 3668  
Hath stranglid the prowess\* of many worthi kniht;  
And couetise, hir sustir vntretable,  
Hath of hih noblesse ful ofte queynt the liht.  
Wher Tantalus regneth, a leoun hath no myht: 3672  
This to meene, hunger & couetise  
Turneþ al noblesse into cowardise.

For bi the counsail of these dukes tweyne,  
Brennyus sette al his oppynyoun; 3676  
To spoille & robbe dede his besi peyne,  
To pile the cites of al that regeoun.  
But in this while, as maad is menciou, 3680  
Mid ther batailles, Bochas doth me lere,  
The god Appollo & Pallas dede appeere.

In the midst  
of the fight  
Apollo appeared,  
young and  
lusty, armed  
all in gold, and  
Diana, with  
her keen  
arrows, and  
Minerva in a  
glittering  
habergeon.

Appollo first shewed his presence,  
Fressh, yong and lusti as any sonne sheene,  
Armed al in gold, and with gret violence 3684  
Entred the feeld[e], as it was weel seene.  
And Diana kam with hir arwes keene,  
And Mynerua in a briht haberioun,  
Which in ther komyng made a terrible soun. 3688

The noise of  
their bright  
armour terrified  
the Gauls, and  
there was a  
hideous earth-  
quake and hail  
storm.

The noise was herd[e] of ther briht armure,  
Which made ther enmyes for feer almost to raue,  
That thei myht afforn hem nat endure,  
Fledde the feeld for dreed, themsilf to saue. 3692  
And ther was herd an hidous erthe-quaue;  
And fro heuene in this mortal bataille,  
Of cold constreynyng gret stonys gan doun haille.

Brennus,  
mortally  
wounded, drove  
a dagger into  
his heart,

Ther aduersaries bete doun & groundid, 3696  
And afforn hem durste nat abide.  
And Brennyus so mortalli was woundid,

3663. Manus] eManus B, Emanvs R, Euridanus P — Thessa-  
lonus P.

3669. prowess] poweer B, R. 3673. &] of H.

3688. Which] The which R.

3694. from H. 3695. doun] to H.

Bothe brest & hed, & hurt thoruh outhur side, —

Loo, heer the eende of couetise & pride:

3700

For Brennyus for constreynt of his smerte

Rooff with a dagger hymseluen to the herte.

This was his eende, vengable & merueilous;

And his dukis slay[e]n bothe tweyne,

3704

Callid Emanus & Thesalorus,

The Grekissh goddis gan at hym so disdeyne.

Of sacrilege seeth heer the greuouse peyne:

For who to goddis list do non obseruance,

3708

Shal vnwarli be punished with vengance.

It is nat holsum with goddis [for] to pleie,

Nor ther puissaunce presumptuousli tattame;

For wher-as thei be vengance list werreie,

3712

Who list assay shal fynde it no game.

For his presumpcioun Brennyus fond the same;

For Appollo, Diane and Mynerue

For his outrage vnwarli made hym sterue.

3716

and both his  
captains were  
slain. The  
gods of the  
Greeks would  
allow no  
sacrilege.

It is not  
wise to trifle  
with the gods.

### Lenvoye.

**T**HIS tragedie declareth, who list heerz, [p. 253]

Of duk Brennyus many græt bataile,

His extort conquest, & hooli the maneere

How [he] bi force rood thoruh al Itaille.

3720

Aftir how he the Romeyns dede assaille;

His fall in Grece bi vengable violence,

For he to goddis list do no reuerence.

Took al the tresours & ieweles most enteere

3724

Out of ther templis, & richest apparaille,

Gold and perle, & al that stuff ifeere,

To his encrees which that myhte auaille.

The riche he robbed, oppressid the poraille,

3728

Of verrai pompe & froward insolence,

And list to goddis do no reuerence.

This myhti tiraunt most surquedous of cheere,

With couetise brent in his entraille,

3732

Whos gredi fret ther myht no mesure steere,

Til that Fortune at myscheeff dede hym faille;

He lakked myht hir variaunt wheel to naille.

This tragedy  
tells of battles  
fought by  
Brennus, and  
how he fell  
in Greece  
because he  
had no respect  
for the gods.

He robbed  
the temples of  
their treasures,  
and all men;

and no measure  
could restrain  
his greed, until  
Fortune threw  
him from her  
wheel.

3703. his] the R.

3705. Emanvs H, Euridanus P — Thesaleus H, Thessalonus P.

3710. for] om. R, J, P. 3720. he] om. J.



Ageyns whos fall ther was no resistance,  
For he [to] goddis list do no reuerence. 3736

Noble Princes,  
virtue is  
stronger than  
plate and  
mail; and the  
chief protection  
of your  
magnificence is  
to do due  
reverence to  
God.

Noble Princis, conceyueth & dooth lere  
The fall of Brennyus for mys gouernaille,  
And prudentli peisyng this mateere, 3740  
Vertu is strenger than outhere plate or maille.  
Afforn considred what Salamon\* doth counsaile,  
Cheef preseruatiiff of your magnificence,  
Is first to God to do due reuerence. 3744

[How Pirrus kyng of pirothe listnat lyue in pees but  
of pride and presumpcioun in werre, cam to  
myschaunce.]<sup>1</sup>

Next appeared  
young  
Pyrrhus, son  
of Eacides, born  
to reign in  
Epirus.

**I**N Bochas book next folwyng on þe ryng  
Cam yong[e] Pirrus, sone of Eacides,  
Born be discent to regnen & be kyng  
And tenherite the lond of Pirothes. 3748  
Yit in his youthe & in his tendre ences,  
The froward peeple duellyng in that place,  
Withoute his gilt, gan his deth purchase.

To preserve  
him from his  
hostile subjects  
he was sent  
to Glaucus,  
king of Illyria,  
whose wife was  
Berenice,

But to preserue hym, as maad is mencionn,  
He was commyttid & taken in keepyng 3752  
Certeyn yeeris for his sauacioun  
To oon Glaucus of Illirie kyng,  
Whos wiff was cosyn, be record of writyng, 3756  
To the seid[e] famous Eacides,  
And she in stori callid Beronices.

born of his own  
line.

He nih of blood[e] to this noble queen,  
Bothe tweyne born of o lynage, 3760  
Wonder gracious to alle that dede hym seen  
And weel fauoured of fetures & visage.  
And in the while of his tendre age,  
Oon Cassander, off Macedoyne kyng, 3764  
Compassid his deth bi sotil fals werkynge.

Yet while he  
was still young,  
Cassander  
plotted his  
death and  
sent for him,  
threatening  
Glaucus that  
unless Pyrrhus  
came he would  
begin a mortal  
war.

And his purpos for to brynge aboute,  
He sente for hym bi fals collusioun,  
Puttyng Glauchus pleyntli out of doute, 3768  
But yiff he cam lich his entencioun,  
He wolde werke to his destruccioun,  
Gadre peeple bothe nih & ferre  
And on Glauchus gynne a mortal werre. 3772

3737. to] *om.* R. 3742. Salamon] Brennyus B, J, R.  
3757. the is repeated in H. 3766. his] this H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 103 verso.

But king Glaucus took therof\* non heede,  
 Hauyng to Pirrus so gret affeccoun:  
 Of hym resceyued verraili in deede  
 To been his sone bi adopcioun,  
 Purposyng of hool entencioun  
 To make Pirrus, pleyntli yiff he may,  
 To been his hair & regne aftir his day.

But Glaucus  
 paid no atten-  
 tion to him,  
 and purposed  
 to make  
 Pyrrhus his  
 heir;

3776

Pirrus alway up growyng bi ences,  
 Ful amyable bothe of cheer & face;  
 And in this while the peeples of Pirothes,  
 Knowyng that he stood in Glaucus grace,  
 Chaunged ther hertis, cast hem in short space  
 For to restore, alle of o corage,  
 The said[e] Pirrus to his heritage.

and when  
 the people of  
 Epirus heard  
 that he stood  
 in Glaucus'  
 favour, they  
 restored him  
 to his heritage

3780

3784

Thus bi assent he was crowned kyng,  
 Yong, fressh & lusti, & semli therwithal,  
 Wonder weel thewed in his upgrowyng,  
 Lik his lynage of corage wex roiall.  
 The which was cause in especiall,  
 He was beloued of freendis al aboute,  
 And of his enmyes gretli had in doute.

and crowned  
 him king.

3788

3792

The name of hym gan to spreede ferre  
 Thoruh al Grece aboute in ech contre.  
 The lond of Tarente gan in [t]his tyme a werre  
 Ageyn[es] the Romeyns, as ye may see,  
 Requeryng Pirrus that he wolde bee  
 Fauourable & helpyng of entente  
 To the parti of them of Tharente.

He was  
 beloved of  
 his friends and  
 feared by his  
 enemies; his  
 name spread far  
 and wide, and  
 the Tarentines  
 asked him to  
 help them  
 against Rome.

3796

3800

To ther request he gan condescende,  
 And of purpos cast hym nat to faile,  
 Yif that Fortune wolde hym grace sende,  
 With myhti hand & marcial apparaile  
 For to be lord & conquere al Itaille,  
 As dide his vncle whilom, dout[e]les,  
 Callid Alisaundre kyng of Epirothes.

[p. 254] This he did,  
 and aspired to  
 the conquest of  
 all Italy.

3804

3773. therof] heerof B, R, J, H 5.

3784. Chaunged] changyng H, R 3, H 5.

3792. al] om. R.

3795. ech] his R.

3796. this] his J, H 5, P — a] om. R, J, P.

3800. the] be H — 1st of] with H.

First he had  
a battle with  
a Roman consul  
at Heraclea,

First he began his conquest in Itaille 3808  
Toward Heraclie, a myhti gret cite,  
Wher with Brennyus he hadde a gret bataille,  
Consul of Rome & lord of that contre.  
And to thencre of his felicite, 3812  
As [it] is remembred in historie,  
Vpon Romeyns he gat that victorie.

and won by  
means of his  
elephants with  
castles on their  
backs.

The olifauntis with castelis on ther bak 3816  
Caused Pirrus, the yonge manli knyht,  
With his wisdam, in which ther was no lak,  
To putte his enmyes that day to the fliht.  
And in this while it happed foorth riht,  
The Secilians, Bochas berth record, 3820  
Among hemsilff[e] wer at gret discord.

At that time  
the Sicilians  
were at discord  
among them-  
selves and  
asked Pyrrhus  
to be their  
king.

Ther was atween hem gret dyuisioun,  
Ech to other contrarie in werkyng;  
But to refourme ther fals discencioun, 3824  
Thei preied Pirrus to come & be ther kyng.  
To whos request he fulli assentyng,  
Bi them maad strong, list nat to differre,  
Ageyn the Romeyns to begynne a werre. 3828

He assented,  
and,  
strengthened by  
them, attacked  
the Romans at  
Naples, where  
he was defeated  
and ran away.

Beside a castell callid Esculus,  
Withynne Poile, his baneres he gan splaie.  
The same day, nat happi nor vrous,  
Contrarious Fortune his power gan affraie, 3832  
Wounded to the deth gan gretli hym dismaye,\*  
Be which occasioun this Pirrus anon riht  
Leep on his courseer & took hym to the fliht.

He made his  
son Helenus  
king of Sicily

A sone he hadde callid Helenus, 3836  
Born of the douhtir of kyng Agothodes,  
Whom he ordeyned, myn auctour tellith thus,  
For to be crowned, to his gret encre,  
On Sicilians to regne ther in pes, 3840  
Weenyng therbi taue had auantage.  
And in this while cam to hym a massage

3808. gan R.

3809. Heraclie] *om.* H.

3810. Brennyus] Leuinus P — gret] strong H.

3813. it] *om.* R, J, H, P. 3815. bak] bakkis H.

3818. to the] vn to H. 3820. berth] bers H.

3827. strong] *om.* R.

3829. Asculus P. 3833. dismaye] disamaie B.

3837. Agathocles P. 3840. ther to regne H, R 3.

- Out of Tharente, which stood in auenture  
 For his absence out of that regeoun, —  
 3844 Yif he nat cam, thei myhte nat endure  
 Ageyn the poweer of them of Rome toun,  
 Which of assent\* wer descendid doun  
 Ageyn[e]s hem, thei stondyng in dispa[i]re,  
 3848 Sauff in abidyng upon his repair.
- Pirrus this while stood in ful hard[e] poynt,  
 Wex abasshed & dul in his corage,  
 Atwix[e] too hangyng in disioynt:  
 3852 Werreied of Romeyns, hatid in Cartage;  
 Hadde a bataille to his fynal damage  
 Withynne a feeld callid Arusius,  
 Ther put to fliht bi oon Fabricius. 3856
- Destitut bi fortune & appeired,  
 Void of socour, bareyn of richesse,  
 Lik a man of hope disespeired,  
 Toward Epire in haste he gan hym dresse,  
 3860 Wher he was first, his stori doth expresse,  
 As ye han herd rehersed be writyng,  
 Bi successioun whilom lord & kyng.
- But whan he cam to Epire his cite,  
 He gan of newe ageyn Antigonus,  
 Kyng of Macedoyne, a ful strong contre,  
 Hym to werreie he was so desirous.  
 And bi conquest, the stori tellith thus,  
 3864 Withynne a while, ther was no gret lettyng,  
 Bi helpe of Fortune he was crownid kyng.
- Nat seune monethes regnyng in quite,  
 Bi Lysymachus, maugre al his myht,  
 He was put doun & remeued from his seete.  
 Yit of presumpcioun, thouh ther was no riht,  
 He took on hym to gynne a newe fliht  
 Geyn Lacedemoyns, & felli them werreie,  
 3872 Onli because thei wolde hym nat obeie.
- Whos presumpcioun whan that thei beheeld,  
 Bothe of prudence & of policie  
 Women wer armed to make a large feeld,  
 3876 With multitude toppressen his partie,
- 3880

and went to  
 Tarentum,  
 where the  
 people were  
 hard pressed  
 by the Romans.

Harassed by  
 the Romans  
 and hated in  
 Carthage, he  
 was again  
 defeated,

and, returning  
 to Epirus in evil  
 plight,

nevertheless  
 began a  
 successful war  
 against  
 Antigonus of  
 Macedon and  
 was crowned  
 king in his  
 stead.

Seven months  
 later he was  
 dethroned by  
 Lysimachus and  
 presumptuously  
 attacked the  
 Spartans.

Even the  
 women took  
 the field against  
 him, and his  
 son was slain.

3846. the] ther R. 3847. assent] ascent B.  
 3851. abassht R. 3855. Arusius] Tarentinus P.  
 3859. despeired R, J, disepeirid H.



For comoun proffit put hem in iupartie;  
 And fynalli such was ther ordenaunce,  
 That seid[e] Pirrus was brouht to myschaunce. 3884

Afterwards  
 he fought  
 the Argives and  
 was killed by  
 a stone as he  
 came to the  
 city wall.

His sone ther slayn, callid Tholome, [p. 255]

And many other loste ther her lyues;  
 Yit for al that, of pride and cruelte,  
 He gan a werre ageyn[e]s the Argyues. 3888  
 And at the eende of al his mortal striues,  
 For conclusioun, this was his laste fall,  
 Slayn with a ston as he cam to ther wall.

His head was  
 cut off and  
 sent to Antig-  
 onus.

His hed smet off in the same place, 3892

And therof made an oblacioun  
 To Antigonus for a gret solace.  
 Thus list Fortune quite his presumpcioun,  
 Afftir his werris with many regioun. 3896

Loo, heer the eende of folkis rek[e]les  
 That folwed werre & list nat lyue in pes!

[How the tiraunt Aristotyn/ bi trecherous werkyng  
 sette a-side the right lyne/ was crowned kyng  
 of Epirothes & aftir slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

Aristotimus, a  
 tyrant, set  
 aside the two  
 heirs to the  
 throne of  
 Epirus,

**F**ORTH procedyng, folwyng Iohn Bochas  
 I will reherse in ful pleyn langage 3900

How Aristotyn, a tiraunt, this the cas,  
 Caste & compassed bi ful gret outrage,  
 Hauyng no title of riht nor heritage,  
 Of Epirothes bi trecherous werkyng 3904  
 Voidyng the lyne, ther to be crowned kyng.

Pyrrhus and  
 Ptolemy, and  
 became king  
 himself.

Lyuyng too childre, the stori tellith thus,  
 Born bi discent to regne in that cite,  
 Theldest of them callid was Pirrus 3908

And the second named Tholome;  
 And bothe tweyne bi the cruelte  
 Of Aristotyn wer falsli set aside,  
 He maad[e] kyng, this tiraunt, thoruh his pride. 3912

Like a tyrant  
 he slew and  
 exiled all the  
 notables

And whil that he thus gan occupie,  
 Lik a tiraunt cruel & vengable,  
 Of fals[e] rancour and malencolie

3885. R omits to line 484 of Book V. 3886. loste] lefft H.

3896. many a H.

3901. Aristotimus P. 3910. the] om. H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 104 recto.

Slouh al the citeseyns that wer most notable, 3916  
 And exilid, this stori is no fable,  
 Onli of malis withynne his herte cloos,  
 Al that wer contrary vnto his purpos.

Vnto the women bi fraudulent sentence 3920  
 He made ordeyne, aftir that anon,  
 Of feyned pite gaff to them licence  
 To ther freendis freeli for to gon  
 With ther richessis; but thei wer euerichon 3924  
 Bi his biddyng & bi his fals tresoun  
 Take bi the weie & fetrid in prisoun, —

Or thei wer war was set on them arest.  
 And aftir that, of vengable cruelte 3928  
 The[r] childre slay[e]n, sovkyng at ther brest,  
 Maidnes oppressid of ther virgynyte.  
 But in this while, at Epire\* the cite  
 Ther was a kniht passyng of gret age, 3932  
 Which caste of purpos tauenge [t]his outrage.

This same kniht, myn auctour tellith thus,  
 In the stori pleynli as I reede,  
 Was in Greek tunge callid Bellanicus,  
 Riht wis & manli bothe in werk & deede. 3936  
 And thynges tweyne put hym out of dreede  
 Texecute his purpos in certeyn,  
 Maugre alle tho that wolde been hym ageyn. 3940

For comoun proffit he drad nat to\* be ded;  
 A cause was this: for he was falle in age;  
 And a-nother, that put hym out of dreed,  
 For he no childre hadde of his lynage. 3944  
 His quarell rihtfull gaf hym auantage,  
 And heerupon gadred hym of newe  
 Such as he knew that manli wer & trewe.

This purpos holde with circumspect auis,  
 And theron maad ful prudent ordenaunce,  
 This Bellanicus, old, hardi & riht wis,  
 Afforn provided bi knihtli purueiaunce,  
 The said[e] tiraunt brouht onto myschaunce 3948  
 Bi help of them that wer to hym assentid,  
 Vnwarli slayn, whos deth was nat repentid. 3952

3920 and told the  
 women they  
 could go  
 to their friends  
 and take their  
 possessions  
 with them.

3928 But after they  
 had started on  
 their journey  
 he waylaid  
 them and put  
 them in prison,  
 slew their  
 children and  
 oppressed the  
 maidens.

3936 An old knight  
 named  
 Hellicanus  
 resolved to  
 punish this  
 outrage.

3940 Childless, and  
 too old to fear  
 death, he  
 collected a body  
 of supporters

3948 and slew the  
 tyrant.

3916. most] full H. 3925. 2nd bi] om. H.

3929. children H. 3931. at] in H, R 3, H 5, P — Epire] Cipre B.

3934. This] The H. 3936. Helematus P.

3941. to] for to B.

[How quene Arcynoe for the auoutrie don with  
Demetrius husbond of hir douhtir Beronices/  
ended in sorow.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas next  
turned his pen  
to the perverse  
licentiousness  
of Arsinoe, who  
was very  
beautiful.

**A**FFTIR this stori Bochas gan applie  
To turne his penne, lik as ye shal heere, 3956  
To write & tell the froward lecherie  
Of Arsynoe, plesaunt of look & cheere,  
Which of hir port & eek of hir maneere  
Was in hir daies, lik as it is founde, 3960  
For crafft & beute callid Venus the secounde.

She was the  
wife of Magas,  
king of Cyrene,  
and they had  
a daughter  
Berenice, who  
was by her  
father's bidding  
to marry the  
son of Ptolemy:

For hir fairnesse youen in mariage  
To noble Agas of Cirenys kyng,  
And atween hem, whil thei wer yong of age, 3964  
Thei hadde a douhtir, bi record of writyng,  
Callid Beronices; the kyng at his eendyng  
In his testament bad she sholde be  
Weddid to the sone of kyng Tholome. 3968

And this was doon of entencioun  
To cese the werris, that hadde endured longe  
Atween Egipt, as maad is mencion,  
And the Cirenys, bothe rewmys stronge: 3972  
Bi this mariage that he myhte vndirfonge  
In his deyng to sette a fynal pes  
Tween these too rewmys for ther bothe ences.

but after Magas'  
death, Arsinoe  
married Berenice

After whos deth[e], thus the mateer stood: 3976  
Queen Arsynoe, most subtil in werkyng,  
Ageyn this mateer so cruel was & wood,  
Maried hir douhtir, withoute mor lettyng,  
Callid Beronices, ageyn[e]s the biddying 3980  
Of hir fadir, that callid was Agas,  
As heer-toforn rehersid is the caas.

to Demetrius,  
brother of  
Antigonus, king  
of Macedon.

She maried hire to oon Demetrivs  
That brother was, bi Bochas rehersyng, 3984  
Onto the myhti grete Antigonvs,  
Beyng in Grece of Macedoyne kyng.  
But infortunat was afftir hir weddyng,  
As in this stori suyng ye shal see, 3988  
Bi the fals werkyng of queen Arsynoe.

3977. most subtil in werkyng] made sotile werkyng H.

3984. bi] om. H. 3987. was afftir hir] he was afftir this H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 104 verso.

And to conclude shortli this mateere,  
 Whan this queen, this double Arsynoe,  
 Sauh of Demetrius the visage & the cheere,  
 His look, his colour, his langage & beute,  
 His manli port & his liberalite,  
 She was enamoured, of flessfli fals plesaunce,  
 Lik hir desir taue his aqueyntaunce.

3992 When Arsinoe  
 saw Demetrius,  
 who was very  
 handsome, she  
 fell in love  
 with him

Of hir nature she was most lecherous;  
 And of hir froward inclynacioun  
 She brouhte aboute that Demetrius  
 Assentid was bi hir suggestioun  
 For tacomplisshe, lik hir oppynyoun,  
 Al hir desirs of flessfli appetit:  
 Thus of accord thei folwed ther delit.

3996 and so managed  
 that she  
 became his  
 mistress.

Lefft his wiff callid Beronices,  
 The queenys douhtir, & ageyn al riht  
 In a place secre, out of pres,  
 Thei lay togidre almost euery nyht,  
 Takyng non heed of God nor of no wiht,  
 Til of fortune the cas is so befall,  
 That he was hatid of his knihtis all,

4004 He forsook  
 Berenice and  
 was hated by  
 his knights for  
 his behaviour.

Despiht thei hadde of Arsynoe,  
 The deede horrible whan thei dide espie.  
 His wiff Beronices eek whan she dede see  
 Hooli the maner of ther ribaudie,  
 In herte she kauhte a gret malencolie,  
 Ordeyned knihtis in steel armid briht  
 In ther auoutry to take\* hem on a niht.

4012 In her wrath,  
 Berenice  
 ordered armed  
 men to take  
 Arsinoe and  
 Demetrius in  
 their adultery.

Liggyng a-bedde, slepte & took no keep  
 Afftir fals lustis which thei hadden vsid,  
 Thei fill upon hem euene whil\* thei sleepe.  
 The deede open myht nat been excusid,  
 To al the world[e] thus thei wern accusid.  
 With suerdis drawe the knihtis thilke niht  
 To slen hem bothe wer purposed anon riht.

4020 Falling upon  
 them in their  
 sleep with  
 drawn swords,  
 they were about  
 to put them  
 both to death;

Out on Beronices! crieth Iohn Bochas,  
 Because she bad spare Arsynoe,  
 Ground, roote & gynnyng of this horrible caas,  
 Seide hir merci was verray øruelte, —

4024 but Berenice  
 badethem spare  
 Arsinoe's life,  
 which Bochas  
 says was a very  
 foolish thing to  
 4028 do,

3993. &] his H, R 3, H 5. 4009. is] om. H.

4017. take] taken B.

4020. whil] whan B, J, R 3, when P.



To saue suchon it was a fals pite,  
 As seith myn auctour, a thyng contrarious,  
 Hir to preserue & slen Demetrius!

for she was  
 the cause of all  
 the trouble.

O Beronices, smal is thi discrecioun, 4032  
 To saue the queen that hath thi[s] tresoun founde.

First to Demetrius she gaff occasioun,  
 For which she sholde haue had the firste wounde  
 Take for them bothe, and in cheynis bounde; 4036  
 And aftir that, this fals Arsinoe  
 Texauple of other sholde haue punished bee.

Arsinoe shielded  
 Demetrius with  
 her naked body

And whil thei wer[e]n thus taken in cloos,  
 The said Arsinoe made no delay, 4040  
 But from hir bed anon she up aroos,  
 Withoute clothes, naked as she lay,  
 Ran to ther suerdis in al ther gret affray,  
 Wente atween hem, did hir besi peyne 4044  
 To bere of strokis with hir armys tweyne.

and begged the  
 knights to spare  
 him and kill  
 her instead.

To saue Demetrius, naked as she stood,  
 Void of al dreed[e] dede hir besi cure,  
 Hir white bodi al bespreynt with blood, 4048  
 Gan to crien out on eueri creature,—  
 “Alas,” quod she, “lat me allone endure  
 Deth be my-silff! ye been to despitous,  
 To save my lyff and slen Demetrius!” 4052

But it was of  
 no avail:  
 both died.

To the erthe anon she fill adoun, [p. 257]  
 To stonde upriht she myht[e] nat susteene,  
 Ded, pale & wan, with many pitous soun  
 Deth of Demetrius gan wofulli bêmeene, 4056  
 Enbracyng hym with al his woundis greene,  
 And in hir armys, al-be that he lay ded,  
 She kissid his mouth, cold, blew & nothyng red.

Berenice  
 afterwards  
 married  
 Ptolemy.

In sorwe & compleynt thus she made an eende. 4060  
 I write no mor of this Arsinoe,  
 But to Beronices ageyn I wil now weende;  
 For Bochas seith, the stori ye may see,  
 She aftir was weddid to Tholome,\* 4064  
 Lik as it was hir fadris first entent,  
 Whan he deied & made his testament. 4066

¶ *Finis libri quarti.*

4033. this] thi J, thy P. 4041. roos H.

4064. Tholome] worthi Tholome B, J, woorthy Ptholome P.

## BOOK V

¶ Incipit Liber Quintus.

[Here Bochas writeth ayenst hem þat delite in beute & semlynesse, calling to purpos how, A man, born in Tuscan which excellid in beute and fairenesse, and for his beute sholdenot\* geve othir occasioun to synne he disfigured his visage with many a grete wounde and spotte.]<sup>1</sup>

**H**EEER Iohn Bochas scorneth & hath  
disdeyn  
Of thre maner folk he dide see  
Heer in þis world[e], which þat in certeyn  
Set al ther ioie and ther felicite  
For texelle in fairnesse & beute,  
Natwithstandyng, as he\* weel telle can,  
It hath vndoon ful many worthi man.

Record he taketh of Demetrius,  
Which in his tyme was fairest in certeyn,  
Which caused hym to be contrarious  
To al vertu; his stori ye haue\* seyn.  
But of tho folk Bochas hath most disdeyn,  
That besi been to conquere & recure  
Beute bi crafft, which kometh nat of nature.

The thridde is he that gruchcheth ageyn Kynde  
For lak of stature or\* of semlynesse:  
And alle thes thre be ignoraunt & blynde,  
And ageyn resoun ther corages thei up dresse.  
Yit aboute beute vertu is maistresse;  
And litil worth is fairnesse in certeyn  
In a persone wher no vertu is seyn.

[p. 259] John Bochas here expresses his contempt for three sorts of people: those who set all their joy to excel in beauty and are contrary to virtue,

8 those who seek to obtain beauty by art which comes not from nature, and those who complain of their lack of stature or good looks.

16

20 Virtue is above beauty.

6. he] ye B, J.    7. many a H.  
11. haue] han B.  
13. to conquere] by conquest to H.  
16. or] & B, J, P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 105 recto — sholdenot] sloddenot J.

- Bochas tells the  
story of a  
Tuscan called  
Spurina, whose  
fairness brought  
women into  
dotage;
- Vnto purpos he tellith of a man  
That excelled al other in fairnesse,  
Callid Spurnya, & born was in Tuscan. 24  
And folkis hadde ioie and gret gladnesse  
To beholde hym for his semlynesse,  
Whos beute brouht[e] women in dotage,  
Whan thei caste ther look on his visage. 28
- Wyues, maydnes duellyng in that contre  
Presed faste on hym to beholde,  
Bi thoccasioun of his gret beute,  
Nat onli yonge, but summe that wer olde. 32  
With lous accesse now wer thei hoot, now colde:  
Thus was his beute to many creature  
Founde in effect a [ful] pereilous lure.
- and as  
their husbands  
were jealous, he  
prudently  
resolved to  
avoid all evil  
occasion,
- Husbondis olde kauhte a fantasie 36  
And hadde in maner a suspeciou, ~~now~~  
Stered bi the serpent of fals ielousie,  
Toward Spurnya, as maad is menciou; ~~now~~  
But for tauoide al euel occasioun 40  
Of any peepel that such malis thouhte,  
Ye shal heere how wisli that he wrouhte.
- by defacing his  
countenance  
with so many  
cuts and  
gashes, that  
he lost all his  
attraction.
- To put a-wey fals delectacioun  
And alle occasiouns of Cupidis rage, 44  
He of prudence and discrecioun  
With many wounde diffaced his visage;  
For he dempte it was a gret damage,  
That bi thenchesoun of excellent beute 48  
Any creature hyndred sholde be.
- Wise  
philosophers and  
poets com-  
mended him  
greatly for this  
notable deed.
- Philisophres & poetis that wer wise  
Gaff vnto hym gret comendacioun,  
That he koude so notabli deuise, 52  
To fynde a weie withynne his resoun,  
To sette aside al occasioun  
Of such vnleefful fless[h]li fantasie,  
That myhte stere women to lecherie. 56
- He saw that all  
beauty fades  
like summer  
flowers
- He knew afforn & sauh bexperience,  
That al beute shal waste a-wey & fade  
Lik somer flours in ther most excellence,  
That growe on hillis & lowe down in the shade: 60  
The rose, the lilie, whan thei be most glade,

Vpon ther stalkis — ther preef is alday seyn —  
Been beten down with a stormy reyn.

And semblabli in eueri creature  
Of lough degre or of hih estat,  
Beute abit nat, nor lenger doth endure  
Than youthes sesoun; with age is ful chekmaat.  
Who thynketh heron, I holde hym fortunat,  
And can afforn[e] in his resoun caste,  
No worldli beute in erthe may alway laste.

64 and lasts no  
longer than  
youth. I hold all  
men fortunate  
who are aware  
of this.

68

### ¶ Lenvoye.

**Y**E worldli folk that reio[i]she in beute,  
Seeth with the eien of your aduertence  
How with a smal sodeyn infirmyte,  
Whan deth & age list shewen ther presence,  
Disteyne al fresshnesse with vnwar violence,  
Ageyn whos myht ther is non other grace:  
Processe of yeeris al beute doth difface.

72 Ye worldly folk,  
who rejoice in  
beauty,  
remember that  
its freshness is  
dimmed by age  
and death.

76

Thouh Demetrius was fair vpon to see,  
As ye han herd rehersed in sentence,  
Geyn lawe & riht he loued Arsynoe,  
Thoccasioun founde bi hir fals insolence,  
Because resoun made no resistance,  
Nat aduertying how eueri hour & space  
Processe of yeeris al beute doth difface.

80 Although  
Demetrius  
was fair, he  
loved Arsynoe  
against law and  
right.

84

Ful horrible was ther iniquite,  
And tofor God hatful ther offence.  
For thoruh fals lust of sensualite,  
Lost was the bridil of inward prouidence.  
Sharp mortal suerd made the recompence,  
Drownid in teres, whan she dide hym embrace,  
With bloodi woundis disfigured al his face.

[p. 260] Their sin was  
horrible and  
hateful to God,  
and their  
recompence was  
death.

88

O noble Princis, lat this stori bee  
A cleer merour to your magnificence,  
Theryn considerid the fals fragilite  
Of worldli fairnesse, which is but apparence  
And transitorie, but so be that prudence  
Gouerne the passage vicious lust tenchace:  
Processe of yeeris al beute doth difface!

92 O noble  
Princes, remem-  
ber the fragility  
of worldly  
beauty, which  
is but appear-  
ance unless  
prudence banish  
all vicious  
desires.

96

75. vnwar] sodeyn H. 80. ageyn H.  
91. disfiguryng H.



[How the too brethern, Seleuchus and Anthiochus  
eche desirous to excellen other fel at discord  
ended in mischeff.]<sup>1</sup>

No quarrel is  
worse than one  
between kindred,  
especially when  
they are persons  
of high estate.

**T**HER is no man þat can in stori reede  
Of mor myscheef nor of mor debat, 100  
Than of debat þat is atween kynreede,  
Tween blood & blood, geyn kynde infortunat;  
Namli in personys which been of hih estat,  
As it fill onys, the stori berþ record, 104  
Atween to brethre that wer at discord.

Seleucus and  
Antiochus, two  
brothers, blinded  
by worldly  
covetousness,  
were bitter  
rivals.

The ton Seleuchus, Antiochus the tothir,  
As the stori heeraftir shal deuise:  
Ech desirous for texcellen othir 108  
In worldli worshep; & wonderli thei wer wise.  
And bothe blent bi worldli couetise  
For to clymben up to hih estat,  
Which caused hem to been at debat. 112

Both were  
mighty kings  
and both were  
destroyed  
by the war that  
arose between  
them.

Bothe mihti kyngis, Bochas makth mencion, *u*  
And of o wombe sothli thei wer born,  
Vndir a cursid fell constellacioun:  
Of froward seed may growe no good[e] corn. 116  
And thoruh couetise bothe thei wer lorn  
And destroied bi the mortal werre  
That was atween hem, in Asie nih & ferre.

It is grievous  
to read of their  
battles and  
broken promises.

It is to me verray contagious 120  
To reede the batailles & the discenciouns,  
The false promyses of Antiochus,  
With his\* deceitis & conspiraciouns.  
Brethre of berthe & off condiciouns, 124  
Contrarious weies euer thei dede weende,  
Froward ther gynnyng [&] froward was ther eende.

Their mother  
was Laodice;  
Seleucus was  
king in Asia,  
Antiochus in  
Syria. They  
lived among  
robbers and  
always fled  
when they  
fought.

Ther mooder was callid Laodices, 128  
And in Asia Seleuchus was regnyng,  
Euer at werre, koude nat lyue in pes;  
And in Surrie Antiochus was kyng.  
And among robbours thei made þer eendying:  
Wher-euer thei fauht, outhir in wrong or riht, 132  
Thei neuer abod but took hem to the fliht.

102. geyn] ageyn H. 107. the] their H.

123. his] the B.

133. Never thei bood J, P — to the] vn to H — the] om. J, P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 105 verso.

Thouh Seleuchus was at his gynnyng  
 Shynyng in glorie & in hih prowessse,  
 And of Asie he was lord & kyng,  
 With gret diffame was dirked his noblesse,  
 Because that he of gret vnkyndenesse  
 Ful falsli slouh, withoute iugement,  
 His yonger brother, that was innocent.

Seleucus lost  
 his good name  
 by slaying an  
 innocent  
 136 younger  
 brother,

And bi the biddyng of Laodices,  
 Which was his mooder, of hatful cruelte  
 Falsli to moordre the queen Beronices,  
 Wiff to the kyng callid Tholome,  
 Regnyng in Egipt; but it stood that he,  
 For al his poweer, failed of his pray,  
 Because that she was war & fledde a-way.

140  
 and he  
 would have  
 killed Queen  
 Berenice, wife  
 of Ptolemy,  
 if she had not  
 144 run away.

Yit aftirward, of old hate & envie,  
 This Seleuchus, bi ful fals tresoun,  
 Moordred Beronices bi conspiracie,  
 Hir sone also, as maad is mencioun.  
 The sclaudre aros thoruh many a regioun  
 And was reportid onto his diffame,  
 Wherthoruh he loste his worshep & his name.

148 Yet he  
 succeeded in  
 slaying her  
 together with  
 her son  
 afterwards.

And on this moordre auengid for to bee,  
 For thorrible gret abusioun,  
 The kyng of Egipt, the said[e] Tholome,  
 Gan make hym strong, & cam with peeple doun.  
 But for ther was so gret discencioun  
 Thoruh al his lond, the stori seith certeyn,  
 He was constreyned to retourne hom ageyn.

Ptolemy sought  
 revenge, but  
 156 could do  
 nothing be-  
 cause of the  
 dissensions in  
 his kingdom.

Seleuchus thanne maad a strong arme,  
 Gadred shippis, stuffed hem with vitaille,  
 Toward Asie he taken hath the se,  
 But such tempest gan his peeple assaile,  
 That ther hertis and poweer gan to faile,  
 With thundryng, lihtnyng vengabli distreyned,  
 To take the lond of neede he was constreyned.

160

Seleucus then  
 collected an  
 army and ships  
 and set sail  
 164 for Asia, where  
 he was forced  
 to land by a  
 tempest. The  
 people treated  
 him kindly.

The peeple of Asie seyng this myscheeff, [p. 261]  
 Hadde of Seleuchus gret compassioun;  
 And ther socour to setten at a preeff,  
 Thei hym resceyued into that regeoun,

172

150. fals conspiracie H.

167. lihtnyng] levenyng — distreyned] disteynyd H.

169. The] This H.

Thouh it [so] stood, as maad is menciou,ne,  
That affor-tyme for his cruel deede  
Thei hadde his persone in ful gret hatreede.

He began a  
war against  
Ptolemy and  
was defeated.

And for he fond Fortune fauourable, 176  
Nat considryng hir mutabilite,  
He cast of rancour for to be vengable,  
And gynne a werre ageyn[es] Tholome.  
His men outraied, he was maad to flee; 180  
Knew no refuge nor socour of non othir,  
But for gret myscheeff sente to his brothir, —

Promising his  
brother to  
crown him king  
of Asia, he  
asked his aid,  
but in the  
meanwhile made  
a ten years'  
truce with  
Ptolemy;

I meene his brothir callid Antiochus,  
Behestyng hym for to crowne hym kyng 184  
Of al Asie, his stori tellith thus, —  
Took treus this while, be sotil fals werkyng,  
With Tholome for ten yeer enduryng;  
And whan his brother cam with his poweer, 188  
Falsid his promys, double of herte & cheer.

and when his  
brother came  
to help him  
failed to keep  
his promise;  
so they  
fell out again  
and fought, and  
Seleucus fled,  
as was his wont.

Thus of newe thei fillen at debat;  
Euerich gan other myhtili werreie.  
Fals couetise tencrecen ther estat 192  
Caused that nouthur list other to obeie.  
Mette in a feeld, ther is no mor to seie,  
Fauht hand of hand ther hostis bothe too;  
Seleuchus fledde, as he was wont to doo. 196

Thus a fals werre of hatreede fraternall  
Ageyn nature set hem at discord,  
Ech bisi was in especial,  
As ther stori remembreth be record, 200  
Neuer ther lyue to been of oon accord.  
But whan Seleuchus was thus put to fliht,  
The peple off Surrie gan deemen anon riht,

When he fled,  
the Syrians and  
Galatians  
thought he had  
been killed, and  
started to  
pillage Asia,

That he that day was outhur taken or ded; 204  
And Gallocrecs, a peeple of gret pouste,  
Of couetise gan haste hem ful gret speed  
Tentre Asie, & spoille al that contre.  
To Antiochus thei hadde eek enmyte, 208  
That he was fayn for his sauacioun  
To paie to them a ful gret raunsoun.

173. maad is] is made H. 195. of] for H.

205. Gallogreies H, Gallogreecs R 3, Gallocreis J, Gallogres H 5.

Ther herte was youe onli to pillage,  
 Takynge of hym of gold gret quantite,  
 And he, seying of robberyng the outrage,  
 Drouh to the pillours; & oon of them was he.  
 And thoruh al Asie thei robbed ech contre;  
 For Seleuchus thei gan so purchace,  
 That he nat durste abiden in no place.

and were joined  
 by Antiochus,  
 212 who paid them  
 a large ransom.

Than Antiochus drouh to Tholome,  
 Void of sauffconduit or any assuraunce,  
 Thouh that atween hem was gret enmyte  
 For a sesoun, as maad is remembraunce,  
 Tafounde socour in his gret greuaunce.  
 But al for nouht; for in conclusioun  
 Tholome hym took & cast in derk prisoun.

Seleucus was  
 pursued from  
 place to place;  
 and Antiochus  
 220 went to  
 Ptolemy  
 without a safe  
 conduct and  
 was put in  
 prison.

Ther constreyned of necessite,  
 Knowynge no mene to make[n] his raunsoun,  
 Bi a woman that lyued in pouerte  
 He was help out of that merk prisoun.  
 Loo, heer of Fortune a fals condicioun,  
 That koude make a kyng withoute peere  
 Of a woman to stonden in daungeere!

A poor woman  
 helped him  
 escape, although  
 he was one of  
 the greatest of  
 kings!  
 228

To proude folk this may be a merour,  
 To seen a prince thus sodeynli brouht lowe,  
 That shon in richesse lik an emperour,  
 Which of disdeyn[e] list no man to knowe.  
 Now is he cast; now is he ouerthrowe;  
 Now hath he cause to pleyne, weepe & mourne,  
 Knowynge no freend for socour hym to tourne.

232 This should be  
 an example to  
 all proude  
 people.

He was afferd to holden his passage  
 Bi hih-weies, or for to come in siht;  
 Fill among theues; & thei be gret outrage  
 Al merciles thei\* slouh hym anon riht.  
 And his brother, for al his gret[e] myht,  
 Callid Seleuchus, which was a gret[e] wonder,  
 Fill from his courseer & brak his nek assonder.

Afraid to travel  
 on the highway,  
 240 he was captured  
 and slain by  
 robbers. His  
 brother  
 Seleucus fell  
 off his horse  
 and broke his  
 neck.  
 244

211. hertes H.

213. robberyng] robbery H, R 3, robbery H 5.

222. To haue founde J, P.

224. in derk] hym in H, R 3, H 5.

228. merk] dirke H, R 3, dyrke H 5, darke P.

242. thei] ther B.



[How the noble quene Leodomia was in the temple  
slayn, and vengeaunce taken/ vpon him that  
slouh hir.] <sup>1</sup>

Six princes and  
princesses next  
came before  
Bochas  
piteously  
weeping.

**S**IXE of estatys, princis & princessis,  
Shewed hem to Bochas pitousli pleynnyng,  
To hym declaryng ther mortal heuynessis; 248  
And first of alle ther cam to hym weeping  
The noble queen, hir sorwes rehersyng,  
Cald Laodomya, which with ful heuy cheere  
Compleyned the myscheef of hir sustir deere, 252

The first of  
them was queen  
Laodameia, who  
complained  
that when  
her sister  
Nereis married  
the king of  
Sicily,

Callid Nereis, yong & tendre of age, [p. 262]  
That weddid was of Cicile to the kyng.  
And on the day of that gret mariage,  
Ther fill a stryff & a gret meuyng 256  
Among the comouns bamaner of risyng;  
That whan the queen[e] therof hadde a siht,  
To Dians\* temple anon she took hir fliht.

the commons  
rose in rebellion  
and the two  
queens fled  
to the temple  
of Diana for  
protection.

The peple was parti, & roos ageyn the kyng; 260  
For which[e] rumour & the sodeyn striff,  
Laodomya, ful feerfulli quakyng,  
Ran to the temple for to saue hir lyff,  
Supposyng in hyr ymagynatiff, 264  
That for the templis chast[e] reuerence  
Men wolde spare to do ther violence.

Laodameia  
was slain  
before the  
altar by one  
Milo;

But ther was oon bi whom the striff began,  
And was first ground of this gret mocioun, 268  
Callid Milo, a fals Cicilian,  
Void of al reuerence & deuocioun.  
Ran to the temple fersere than leoun,  
And wher the queen the auter dede embrace, 272  
With a sharp suerd[e] slouh hir in the place.

but the gods  
and Diana  
punished his  
sacrilege.  
A great  
pestilence  
followed, and  
Milo went mad  
and slew  
himself on the  
twelfth day  
after.

This sacrilege was punished be vengeaunce;  
Goddis wer wroth with this gret offence.  
And Diana bi ful gret displesaunce 276  
Made in the contre a sodeyn pestilence;  
And Milo was bi vnwar violence  
Turnid bestial, maad wood in that affray,  
And slouh hymself suyng the tuelfte day. 280

247. compleynnyng H. 249. to hym ther cam H, R 3, H 5.  
259. Dians] Dianis B, dyanys R 3, Dianas P. 260. peeples H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 106 recto.

[How\* Cleomens ky[ng] of Macedoyne was slayn  
with his wif and childre.]<sup>1</sup>

A FFTIR this vengauce taken on Milo,  
Cam Cleomenes of Macedoyne kyng;  
And to Bochar gan shewe\* his dedli wo,  
His gret iniuries of enmyes assailyng,  
His hih emprises, his kyngdam defendyng,  
And aldirlast how he in his cite  
Was bi the sone slayn off Tholome.

Cleomenes, king  
of Macedonia,  
who was slain  
by the son  
of Ptolemy, next  
appeared to  
Bochas.

284

First in his contre, the stori doth deuise,  
Ageyn his enmyes he hadde a gret bataile,  
Of his peeple deffendyng the fraunchise  
Of knihtli prowesse, as he that list nat faile  
For his riht to fiht in plate & maile,  
His lieges echon beyng of assent  
To lyue and deie with hym in ther entent.

288 He defended  
his country  
against its  
enemies

292

Men and women, & childre yong of age  
Wern of oon herte as in this mateere,  
Which made hem strong & gaff\* gret auantage,  
That vndeuided thei stood echon ifeere  
Off o corage, off o will & o cheere,  
Gretli assurid in ther oppynyoun,  
Because among hem was no dyuysiou.

296 and had the  
support of all  
his people,  
for there was  
no division  
among them.

300

Ther comoun proffit thei dede mor preferre  
Than thei dede tresour, lyff or good;  
For ther fredam ay redi to the werre,  
Nat afferd\* to spende ther owne blood.  
And fynali togidre so\* thei stood,  
That of o thouht ech gan hym redi make,  
To lyue and deie for his brothres sake.

304 They preferred  
their common  
good to all  
other things  
and were not  
afraid to shed  
their blood for  
their country.

308

Thei\* hadde an enmy born of that regeoun,  
The name of whom was Antigonus;  
And he had weddid, the book makth menciou, *om.*  
The olde queen of kyng Demetrius,

312 Their enemy  
was Antigonus,  
who had  
married the old  
queen of king  
Demetrius and  
usurped the

283. to shewe B. 285. kyndam H.

297. gaff] gat B, J, gate P.

299. 2nd off] *om.* H.

305. offerd B.

306. so togidre B, J, P, H, H 5.

308. brothis H.

309. Thei] That B, J, H 5, Than R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 106 verso — How] His J.

crown of Sparta  
in behalf of her  
son Philip;

And hadde hir sone, the stori tellith thus,  
Callid Phelipp, for youthe in his keepyng,  
Therbi pretendyng a title to be kyng.

but he was  
put out of  
the kingdom  
for all his  
presumption.

Off Lacedemonois cleymed ageyn riht 316

Ther to regne & take pocioun,  
Lik a tiraunt vsurpyng of gret myht,  
For to be crowned in that regeoun.

But for al his fals presumpcioun 320

He was put of and Iset a-ferre,  
Thouh he with hem heeld a [ful] mortal werre.

Cleomenes  
was in the  
battlefield  
every day,  
hardy as a lion.

And Cleomenes that was rihtful kyng  
Was in the feeld[e] armyd eueri day, 324

Hardi as leoun, dradde hym [in] nothyng,  
Geyn his enmyes he stood so at a-bay,  
That from the feeld he maad hem fleeen away:  
His dreedful suerd grounden was so keene, 328  
That tabide hym [thei] myhte nat susteene.

Finally he  
wearied of  
the constant  
warfare and  
thought it  
would be best  
to have peace

And on a day diffendyng his cite,  
Heeld in the feeld[e] a ful strong bataille;  
With litil peeples made his foon to flee, 332

Retournyng hom ful weri of trauaille,  
Thouhte in his herte that it sholde auaille  
To stynte the werre hangyng in noun certeyn,  
Til that his peeples refresshid wer ageyn. 336

until his people  
had recovered.  
Leaving his  
country well  
guarded, he  
went to Egypt  
with his wife  
and children  
and lived there  
until Ptolemy's  
death.

Set ordenaunce thoruh al the contre [p. 263]

Geyn al enmyes to make resistance;  
And into Egypt he goth to Tholome,  
With wiff & childre withdrawyng his presence. 340  
Ther resceyued with gret benyuolence  
Lich his estat, out of care & dreed,  
And ther abood til Tholome was\* ded.

But afterwards  
Ptolemy's son  
slew him and  
all his family,  
a strange and  
cruel thing to  
do.

But the sone of kyng Tholome, 344

Which regnid aftir bi successioun,  
Of fals envie & vengable cruelte  
Slouh Cleomenes in that regeoun,  
His wiff & childre, void of compassioun. 348

Alas, it was to straunge a cruel thyng,  
Withynne his\* kyngdam to moordre so a kyng.

326. ageyn H.

329. That] For H. R 3, H 5—thei] om. R 3.

338. ageyn H.

343. was] wer B, J. 350. his] a B, J, P.

[Of kyng Yero\*, Cornelie, and Hanybal.]<sup>1</sup>

A FFTIR whos deth þus wrouht bi violence,  
 [As] the stori remembreth proceedyng,  
 Foorth cam Yero & shewed his presence,  
 Of Siracuse the myhti stronge kyng,  
 Tofor Bochas ful pitousli pleynyng,  
 Besechyng hym with a ful pitous cheere  
 Of his myscheef to writen the maneere.

Hiero of  
 Syracuse  
 besought  
 352 Bochas to write  
 the manner of  
 his misfortune.

The which Yero, wilful & furious,  
 List to presume of fals rebelloun  
 For to debate with Appius Claudius,  
 And to maligne ageyn[es] Rome toun.  
 But he anon for his presumpcioun  
 Constreyned was, in al his moste pride,  
 Lik a coward to fleen & nat abide.

He rebelled  
 against Rome  
 and fought with  
 Appius  
 360 Claudius,  
 and was com-  
 pelled to flee  
 like a coward.  
 Bochas wrote  
 no more about  
 him.

No mor of hym myn auctour writeth heer,  
 But in his book[e] as he doth proceede,  
 ¶ Ther cam Cornelie, of Rome a consuleer,  
 Hymself compleynyng of the gret falsheede  
 Which onto hym acomplished was in deede,  
 Bassuraunce broke, of olde Hanybal,  
 Which of Cartage was cheeff admyral.

Cornelius, a  
 Roman consul,  
 came next and  
 complained  
 of the deceit of  
 368 Hannibal,  
 admiral of  
 Carthage, who  
 swore to sup-  
 port him  
 against Rome,  
 and then let  
 him die in  
 prison.

To this Cornelie Hanybal was sworn  
 With the Affricanes bamaner flaterie,  
 To socoure hym, as I\* ha[ue] tolde tofor,  
 With the Romeyns to holde up his partie.  
 But whan thei mette, the book doth specifie,  
 Corneli take & fetrid in prisoun,  
 At myscheeff deied; ther geyned no raunsoun.

372

Than Hanybal entred of entent  
 With his knihtis inta gret cite  
 Of Cicile callid Agrigent,  
 Wher Iulius Silua, of old enmyte,  
 Leid a siege with a gret meyne,  
 That he constreyned the saide Hanybal  
 For verray hunger to lepe ouer the wal.

Hannibal was  
 afterwards  
 380 besieged by  
 Julius Silva in  
 Agrigentum,  
 whence taking  
 flight, he  
 escaped by sea  
 and was finally  
 384 stoned to death  
 by his knights.

Bi a posterne he took hym to the fliht,  
 Gadred shippis & took the Large Se.  
 And Iulius Silua, lik a manli kniht,

388

368. of] on H. 371. Amyrall H. 374. I] we B, J.

MS. J. leaf 107 recto. Yero] Nero J.



Fauht with hym, & made hym for to flee,  
 Vpon the watir; [&] anon aftir he  
 Was of his knihtes stoned to the deth,  
 And so constreyned he yald up the breth.

392

[Off the Duk zantipus/ cast in to see.]<sup>1</sup>

After Hannibal  
 was slain, Duke  
 Xanthippus of  
 Sparta appeared.

AFFTIR that Hanybal was slay[e]n thus  
 And put to flih[t], as maad is mencionn,  
 Tofor Bochas cam worthi Zantipus,  
 A famous duk, ful notable off renoun.  
 And he was lord of the strong regioun  
 Lacedemoyn, & was com from a-ferre  
 Into Cartage to help hem in the werre.

396

He helped  
 Carthage against  
 Rome and  
 captured  
 Marcus Regulus.

Bi whos prowesse, to his encrees of glorie,  
 The proud[e] Romeyns wer put to the fliht;  
 Cartagynensis hadde of them victorie.  
 And ther was take the wise manli kniht  
 Marchus Regulus, & brouht anon riht  
 Into Cartage, & lad as prisoneer  
 Bi Zantipus, as Bochas writeth heer.

400

404

But for all his  
 high prowess,  
 the  
 Carthaginians  
 envied him and  
 cast him into  
 the sea when  
 he sailed home  
 in one of their  
 ships.

This noble duk, for al his hih prowessis  
 Doon in Cartage & shewed to ther toun,  
 And for al his notable kyndenessis,  
 Thei most vnkyndeli quit hym his guerdoun;  
 For sailyng hom toward his regioun,  
 In a shipp stuffid of ther contre,  
 Of fals envie thei cast hym in the se.

408

412

Yet his name  
 will remain in  
 the House of  
 Fame always.

To his noblesse and famous cheualrie,  
 Whan he of knihthod sat hiest in his flours,  
 Thei of Cartage of\* hatreede & envie  
 Maligned ageyn hym, cheeff sonne of ther socours,  
 Taclipsed his lih[t]: but therageyn auctours  
 Han be writyng perpetueli set his name  
 And it registred in the Hous of Fame.

416

420

393. slayen] I slayn R 3, yslain P, Islayn H 5.

394. And] First H.

398. com] comen H.

413. thei] that H — the] om. H.

416. of] be B, H 5, bi J, R 3, by P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 107 recto.

[How Marchus Regulus, of his fre wil deied for  
the comon wele.]<sup>1</sup>

WHO can reherse or telle\* the ground of  
werris,

[p. 264] Who can tell  
why wars first  
began? Was it  
by the influence  
of the stars or  
the wilful rage  
of man?

The firste cause of such mortal outrage\* —

Wher it began bynfluence of steris

Tween man and man, or of wilful rage,

424

As atween Romeyns & folkis of Cartage,

To gret hyndryng, considered the maneere,

Of bothe parties, as bookis doth us lere.

Italiens therwith wer greued ofte,

428

Namli whan Fortune was ther aduersarie.

Both the  
Italians and the  
Africans  
suffered from  
the variance of  
Fortune,

And Affrican[els] felte ful vnsofte,

Whan she to them list to be contrarie, —

Whos cours of custum stoundemeel doth varie,

432

Bexperience it hath be preued weel,

In the ouerwhelmyng of hir vntrusti wheel.

The moste worthi & the moste famous,

Afforn remembrid upon ech partie,

436

Fortune to-day made hem victorious,

to-day  
victorious,  
to-morrow  
vanquished.

And to-morwe she dede ther myht deffie.

Now up, now down; al stood in iupartie,

Lik as she list them fauoure, nih or ferre,

440

Ther losse, ther wynnyng callid fortune of werre.

To summe weelwillid, happi & eurous,

To summe also ful straunge of aqueyntaunce;

Rekne among othir Marcus Regulus,

444

On Romeyn parti a prince of gret substaunce,

To be preferrid & put in remembraunce,

Oon the most worthi & trewe founde in deede

Of knihtli policie that I can of reede.

448

To comoun proffit was ay his aduertence,

Tween loue & hate stondyng so vpriht,

To nouthur side declyned the ballaunce

Of his doomys, for fauour of no wiht,

452

Til that the eie off his inward siht

Conceyued hadde wher the trouthe stood:

Than gaff he sentence; & theron he abood.

was one of  
the most just  
and upright  
of men.

421. reherse or telle] telle or Reherse B. 422. outrages B.

427. doth] don H, R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 107 recto.

In all this  
world there  
was no better  
kniht,—  
well-born,  
handsome, and  
of great  
courage and  
strength.

In al this world ther was no bettir kniht, 456  
Bettir named & born of good lynage,  
A semli persone, delyuer & of gret myht,  
Hardi as leoun, riht manli off visage,  
Wal of the Romeyns, sharp yerd to Cartage, 460  
Demure, nat hasti, seyng al thyng toforn;  
And in Papynia I fynde that he was born.

For his discre-  
tion he was  
chosen consul,

And for he hadde so gret discrecioun,  
This worthi kniht, this Marcus Regulus, 464  
Chosen he was a consul of the toun,  
And hadde a felawe callid Manlius,  
In armys manli, wis and vertuous.  
Which for ther expert notable\* hi h constaunce 468  
Of Romeyn werris hadde the gouernaunce.

and together  
with Manlius  
he defeated  
the Sicilians  
and Hamilcar,  
constable of  
Carthage,

Ther shippis stuffed, maad a gret arme,  
Ful prudentli with knihtli apparaille  
Thes princis tweyne taken han the se; 472  
First with Sicilians hadde a gret bataille,  
Discounfited hem, & at ther arryuaille  
Outraied Amulchar, the stori is no fable,  
That was of Affrik capteyn & constable. 476

and sent great  
plunder and  
many prisoners  
to Rome.

Gat in that contre castellis many on,  
Took prisoneres, stuff & gret richesse;  
And al that pray\* to Roome he sente anon  
Bi Manlius, the stori berth witnesse. 480  
And the Romeyns for his worthynesse,  
Alle of assent, because he was so wis,  
Prolongid han the terme off his offs.

No one was  
equal to him  
in knighthood;  
and he became  
governor of  
Africa and  
Carthage.

Off knihtli noblesse was non onto hym lik, 484  
Nouthir in armys nor politik ordenaunce;  
And for the conquest off Cartage & Affrik,  
To hym thei gaff of bothe the gouernaunce.  
Brouht citees, toun[e]s to the obeissaunce\* 488  
Of the Romeyns, this noble worthi kniht,  
Wher-euer he rood, maugre ther foos myht.

He conquered  
all the neigh-  
bouring  
countries,

Be his feithful laborious dilligence  
Gat al the contres to Cartage toun, 492

456. al] *om.* H. 468. notable expert B, J, R 3, P.  
477. that] *be* H. 479. pray] *parti* B, *partie* J.  
484. R *begins again here.* 487. the] *om.* H.  
488. the obeissaunce] his obeissaunce B, R, J.  
493. vnto] to H.

Til tidyngis cam vnto his presence,  
 Beside a ryuer ther was a gret dragoun,  
 So horrible, as maad is menciouun,  
 That al the contre of hym stood in such doute, 496  
 No man durste neihhe hym ferre aboute.

and killed a  
 horrible serpent

An hundred feet & tueyne was his lengthe,  
 Lik as writeth Titus Lyuyus.

that was one  
 hundred and  
 two feet long.

Was non so hardi, nor no man\* of such strengthe 500  
 That durste approche; he was so venymous.  
 But bi the manhod of Marchus Regulus  
 Islay[e]n was this monstrous serpent,  
 And for a merueil the skyn to Rome sent. 504

Thus in conquest whil he dede his peyne [p. 265] He also  
 To gete castellis & myhti stronge touns, defeated the  
 Geyn hym wer sent Astruballis tweyne, two Hasdrubals  
 Callid of Affrik the hardi champiouns, 508  
 With al the poweer of ther regiouns.  
 But as the stori maketh rehersaile,  
 Thei wer discourfited bothen in bataile.

Amulchar aftir cam with spere & sheeld 512 and Hamilcar.  
 In diffence of Affrik & Cartage;  
 And he was also distrussed in the feeld  
 With al his host[e], maugre his visage.  
 Thus Marchus hadde alway thauauntage, 516  
 Makyng the Romeyns, this kniht most vertuous,  
 Thoruh hih\* prowesse to be victorious.

And wher that he in his tendre age  
 List to laboure & tile his owne lond,  
 For exercise & vertuous auauntage  
 To holde the plouh & leede it with his hond,  
 Auoidyng slouthe, as ye shal vndirstond, —  
 Now thoruh al Affrik with many worthi kniht 524  
 He rideth armed in steel & mailles briht.

In his youth  
 he had tilled  
 his own land,  
 but now he  
 rode through  
 Africa armed  
 in bright steel.

496. stood] *om.* R.

498. hundrith H.

500. so] *om.* H, R — nor no man] man nor B, R, J.

503. was] as R.

506. gete] gret R.

507. hastruballis H.

510. the] ther H.

512. Amilchar P.

514. distrussed] distressid J, distressed P.

518. hih] his B, R, J, P. 522. leede] losne H.

525] In steel and mailles he rideth armed bright J, P — maile H.



- And whenever he fought he was victorious. A golden crown of laurel and a robe of victory were kept for him in Rome. The laurel, which never fades, is granted to conquerors; This noble Mark, what-euer he hadde ado, He was in armys soueryn synguleer; 528  
And in the temple at Rome of Appollo  
For hym was kept a crowne of fressh laureer,  
Forgid of gold, fret ful of stonis cleer:  
And in the temple of Iouis was reserued  
A robe of victorie, which he hath disserued. 532  
To these goddis, who can conside weel,  
Of old custum ther rihtis to meyntheene,  
As for a thyng beyng perpetuel,  
Which fadeth neuere of nature, thus I meene, 536  
Isacid is the fressh[e] laureer greene:  
For causis tweyne grauntid to conquerours,  
In marcial actis bi conquest maad victours.
- for it betokens wisdom, long perseverance in virtue, and foresight. For the noblesse of this tre dyuyne 540  
Sheweth [bi] his odour in wisdam excellence;  
Bi the grennesse, which neuere doth declayne,  
Long abidyng of vertuous prudence;  
The rounde crowne betokneth prouidence, 544  
In signe onli, al knihtli gouernaunce  
Taketh his guerdoun of long contynuaunce.
- Their strength alone does not entitle them to a crown, nor does a proud beginning establish their glory. Ther strengthe onli graunteth hem nat the crowne,  
Nor a proud gynnyng stablisseth nat *per* glorie, 548  
But perseueraunce, who list muse or\* rowne,  
Graunteth to them & putteth in memorie  
The triumphe & palme of ther victorie,  
The crowne of laureer, in stori it is told, 552  
And of Iubiter the riche robe of gold.
- Thus Regulus was honoured by the Romans, Who can disserne, of alle thes giftes thre,  
Most apparteneth on to cheualrie,  
Manli prowesse, wisdam, anon lat see, 556  
Strengthe, hardynesse, conquest, policie? —  
For the Romeyns kauhte a fantasie,  
For his meritis notable & glorious  
To magnefie this Marcus Regulus. 560

526. ado] to do R.

532. robe] robbe H.

541. bi] *om.* J — excellence] & excellence R, J.

548. begynnyng H.

549. or] &amp; B, R.

554. disserne] discern H, discern J, R 3, descerne P.

For this Marcus duryng his lusti yeeris  
 Prynce of the werris geyn Affrik & Cartage,  
 Took alle ther yonge knihtis prisoneeris,  
 Sent hem to Rome for comoun auantage.  
 But O, alas! whan he was falle in age,  
 The geri goddesse, among hir chaunges alle,  
 Ageyn this prince hir fauour made appalle.

and during the  
 years of his  
 prime he took  
 all the young  
 knights of  
 Carthage  
 564 prisoner.

For to withstonde the prowess of this kniht,  
 In helpe of Affrik, as maad is mencion,  
 Cam Zantipus, of whom I spak now riht,  
 A myhti duk, the which[e] was sent down  
 Fro Lacedemoyne; which thoruh his hih renoun,  
 Whan the powere of Marchus gan to faille,  
 His mene slay[e]n, took hym in bataille,—

568 But when he  
 grew old,  
 Xanthippus  
 captured him  
 in battle

Into Cartage sent hym prisoneer;  
 And ther he lay in stronge cheynys bounde.  
 Loo, how Fortune chaunge can hir cheer,  
 Falsest of trust whan she is most iocounde;  
 First fauourable, aftir froward founde:  
 This hir maner with hir double face,  
 Folk that sit hiest to chaunge hem fro ther place.

576 and sent him in  
 chains to Car-  
 thage. Such is  
 the manner of  
 Fortune:

For he that whilom hadde in subieccioun  
 Almost al Affrik, & Cartage the cite,  
 Now lith he bounde & fetrid in prisoun,  
 Whilom in glorie, now in aduersite,  
 Cast in miserie from hih prosperite.  
 Fortunis fauours be maad, who looke weel,  
 Of brotel glas rather than of steel.

584 her favours are  
 of brittle glass  
 rather than of  
 steel.

This manli kniht, al-be that he lay cheyned, [p. 266]  
 Which had brouht Rome to so hih encres,  
 That thei of Affrik & Cartage wer constreyned  
 Vnto the Romeyns to pursue for a pes;  
 And for tacomplisshe this mateer dout[e]les,  
 Vndir assuraunce made in Cartage toun,  
 Thei took[e] Marcus anon out of prisoun.

588 Although  
 Regulus was  
 in prison, the  
 Carthaginians  
 were con-  
 strained to ask  
 592 the Romans for  
 a peace;

Bounde bi his oth, ther is no mor to seyn,  
 He to be chaungid for Affrik prisoneris;  
 Ther for tabide, & thei to come ageyn,  
 The yonge knihtis, fressh lusti of ther cheeris.

596 and they sent  
 him to  
 Rome under  
 oath, to be  
 exchanged for  
 their young  
 knights.

563. ther] the R. 580. 1st hir] his R.  
 590. to] vp to H, R 3.

So that Marchus, feeble & old of yeeris, 600  
 Bi Affrican[e]s was to Rome sent,  
 Bi oth assured, tacomplisshe ther entent.

The Romans  
 valued him more  
 than all their  
 prisoners of  
 Carthage,

For the Romeyns hadde in such deynte  
 This noble Mark for manhod & prudence, 604  
 And for the foorthryng of ther comounte,  
 Thei hadde his persone for wisdam in reuerence,  
 Cald of that toun ther wal & ther diffence,  
 Hadde in mor cheerte for knyththod in that age 608  
 Than al ther prisoneris of Affrik & Cartage.

and rejoiced at  
 his deliverance.

Romeyns gretli reioisshe of his comyng,  
 And specialli for his delyueraunce;  
 Alle attonis, of herte & trewe menyng, 612  
 Saide, "wolcom hom, our ioie, our\* suffisaunce,  
 Wolcome, merour of knihtli gouernaunce!"  
 This was ther vois & this was ther langage  
 At his repair from Affrik & Cartage. 616

Received with  
 cries of welcome,  
 and presented  
 to the Senate,  
 he said:

And thus resceyued lik to his estat  
 And conueied thoruh al the cite,  
 Nobli presentid up to the senat,  
 Began his tale, anon as ye shal see, 620  
 As he that hadde mor in cheer[i]te  
 The comoun proffit than his delyueraunce,  
 Saide onto them these woordes in substaunce:

"Sirs, I was  
 sent as prince  
 and consul to  
 Africa. Seven  
 years have I  
 been there  
 chastising the  
 rebels of that  
 country.

"Sires, be thauys of you echon present, 624  
 First bi thestatis, next bi the comounte,  
 As prince & consul to Affrik I was sent;  
 And, as ye knowe, seuene yer I haue ther be  
 To chastise rebellis of that contre, 628  
 And bi the fauour & helpe of Goddis myht,  
 To your cite aquit me lik a kniht.

"I am now  
 grown old.  
 Fortune is no  
 longer favour-  
 able to me;  
 and the people  
 of Carthage wish  
 me to be sold  
 in exchange for  
 your prisoners.

In this mateer it needeth nat to tarie,  
 Ye knowe yoursilff I am now wexen old, 632  
 And Fortune is to me contrarie,  
 Werbi your enmyes in Affrik be maad bold.  
 And thei desire me for to be sold  
 In eschaung, bi short conclusioun, 636  
 For prisoneres which ye\* haue in the toun.

609. ther] be H.

612. trewe] of H, R 3, H 5. 613. our] & our B, R, J.

627. And] om. H — I haue ther] there I haue J, P.

637. ye] thei B, H, R, J, R 3 — the] bis H, this R 3, P.

And bi the fauour of goddis hih in heuene,  
 And bi my felawes wis mediacioun,  
 Contrees, provynces, mo than sixe or seuene 640  
 I haue in Affrik maad subiect to this toun,  
 Maugre ther myht & ther rebelloun,  
 And them constreyned, lik as ye desire,  
 For tobeie vnto your empire. 644

To make your lordship\* mor statli glorious,  
 And tencrece the boundis of your cite,  
 Whilom bi grace I was victorious,  
 Venquissed your enmyes wher-euer I dede hem  
 see; 648

Now thoruh Fortunis mutabilite  
 Maad vnhappi & desolat of cheer, —  
 Sumtyme a prince & now a prisoneer.

Afforn, my power bi Fortune was fraunchised, 652  
 Now am I thrall & fetrid in prisoun;  
 Myn olde triumphes be neweli now disguised,  
 And [my] victories oppressid & bor doun.  
 With this considered the transmütacioun 656  
 Of youthe passid & myn vnweeldi age,  
 Lital wonder thouh dul be my corage.

Yit ther is a thyng that draweth along my lyff,  
 Which in myn herte hath sette gret gladnesse: 660  
 To your ences how in this mortal striff  
 Bi my labour & knihtli bisynesse  
 The marcial princis, famous in worthynesse,  
 With al the knihtis most soueryn of renoun 664  
 Souht thoruh Affrik, be now in your prisoun.

Bi whos absence feeblid is Cartage;  
 The contre porissed, brouht to disencres.  
 Seyng that I am dul and falle in age  
 Geyn Affricans to put my-silff in pres, 668  
 Causing your enmyes [to] pursue for the pes  
 Beschauung of me, that may but smal auaille,  
 For Affrik knihtis most expert in bataille. 672

"Once I was  
 a prince and  
 victorious; but  
 now I am a  
 prisoner of war.

"My former  
 triumphs are  
 transformed,  
 my victories  
 borne down, my  
 youth passed.

"Yet it cheers  
 me to know  
 that through  
 my labour you  
 have the best  
 knights of  
 Africa in your  
 prison,

which weakens  
 your enemies.  
 They now  
 ask to have  
 them back again  
 in exchange for  
 me,

641. this] his R.

645. lordship] Empire B, R, J.

655. &] an R.

659. a thyng] a nothir H, R 3 — that] om. J — along] a length P.

671. of] for H, R 3.

672. Affrik] be Affrik H, þaffrike R 3, the Auffryk H 5.



so that they  
may begin  
a new war  
on your city.

Thei stonde in hope of ther delyueraunce [p. 267]

Beschaung of me, now sent out of prisoun,  
Of entent tencrecen ther puissaunce,  
Of newe to gynne a werre upon your toun. 676  
Now taketh good heed, & of discrecioun  
Peiseth of prudence this thyng that I haue told,  
Ther youthe considred, & I am feeble & old.

"I am feeble  
and old, they  
lusty and fresh;

I am consumyd & wered in the werris; 680

Fortune contrarie, I feeble to bere armure:  
Thei lusti fressh, ther name spredde ful ferr is,  
And in the feeld thei able to endure.

I vnweldi, & lik a creature 684  
Mor sembl[abl]e to drawe hom to my graue,  
Than to be armyd this cite for to saue.

and I am more  
anxious for the  
profit of your  
commonwealth  
than for my  
own deliverance.

And in effect, I haue mor cheer[i]te,  
Of verray feith withoute variaunce, 688

Vnto the proffit of your comounte  
Than to the mateer of my delyueraunce;  
Too thynges peised & weied in ballaunce:  
Of Affrik knyhtis thexpert worthynesse, 692  
In me the constreynt off agis feelbilnesse.

"I cannot do  
better than die  
for the  
community."

And to conclude upon this mateer,  
I myhte neuere, as semeth onto me,  
As of knihtod disseruen the laureer 696  
Nor the tryumphe in this famous cite,

Bet than deie tencrece the comounte,  
And thus auised, of herte & hool corage  
Yeld up the sperit of myn vnweeldi age." 700

Persevering in  
this intention,

In this purpos, he, stedfast as a wall,  
Of o will and oon perseueraunce,  
Hymself comendyng to goddis inmortal,  
Ches for to deie off politik constauce, 704  
And to preferre bi notable purueyaunce  
The comoun proffit: this was his motiff, —  
Set aside good, tresour and his lyff.

he returned to  
Carthage a  
prisoner.

Riht weel cheerid, stable of his visage,  
Of parfit loue he hadde onto the toun,  
He is repaired ageyn onto Cartage, 708

676. newe] now R. 677. taketh] take H.

682. name] fame H, R 3, H 5.

685. semblable] seemly R.

702. oon] o H. 710. onto] in to H.

Tharticles kept and the condicioun  
At the departyng from Affrik regioun:  
This to seyne, texpleite ther lust certeyne,  
Or prisoneer he to resorte ageyn.

712

At his departyng the Romeyn senatours  
Gan wexe pale off compassioun,  
To seen the paus of al ther old socours  
As prisoneer departe out of the toun.  
Princessis, ladies fill a-swowne down;  
Childre wepte & cried for pite,  
"Farweel upholdere, cheeff wal of our\* cite!"

At his departure  
the Roman  
716 Senators grew  
pale with  
compassion,  
princesses and  
ladies fell down  
in a swoon and  
the children  
720 wept.

Was euer founde any trewer kniht?  
Which of his owne feithful mocioun,  
Wher he was free, & poweer hadde & myht,  
Taue stonde at large bi his eleccioun,  
To keepe his promis repaired to prisoun!  
What shal I write of his noblesse or shewe? —  
To fynde oon lik hym, I reede but of a fewe!

Never was there  
a truer knight.

724

And whan he cam ageyn with his massage,  
Knowyng thentent of this worthi knyht,  
Most furiousli the peepole of Cartage,  
In the presence of euery maner wiht,  
Ordeyned han a torment anon riht.

The people of  
Carthage,  
furious in their  
disappointment,  
tortured him  
by cutting off  
732 his eyelids,

728

First the liddis of his eien tweyne,  
Thei kutte hem of to encrece his peyne,  
That he nat sholde slepen in prisoun,  
But euer wachche with peyne intollerable,  
And for the constreynt of his passioun  
Crie & compleyne with sihhis lamentable.  
And aftir this, thei token a pley<sup>n</sup> table,  
Fret ful of nailles sharp[e] whet & grounde,\*  
And therupon naked thei hym bounde.

736 and bound him  
naked to a  
table studded,  
with sharp  
nails,

740

Another table thei leide on hym aloffte,  
Nailed also; and atween thes tweyne  
Thei couchid hym; his\* bed was ful vnsoffte,  
Most importable, so hidous was the peyne;  
The blood ran out of eueri senew & veyne.  
This was his torment, alas, a cruel deth! —  
Of worthi Marchus til he yald up the breth.

744 beneath another  
nailed table,  
and let him  
lie there till  
he died.

748

711. tharticle H. 712. At] And R. 721. our] ther B, J, R.

728. reede but of] fynde but P — of] om. P.

729. his] this H. 741. grounde] Igrounde B, R, J.

745. his] this B, R, J, R 3, P.

Who ever read  
of such a  
steadfast prince?

Who radde in bookes or euer dede see  
Of any princis so stedfast & so stable  
As whilom wern in Rome the cite,  
Or in ther conquest so longe perdurable,  
On vertu foundid, of corage vnchaungable!  
Rekne up alle that euer wer in that toun,  
And to this Marchus mak no comparisoun.

752

756

Regulus  
eclipses the glory  
of the Camilli,  
Papiri, Scipios,  
of Curtius and  
Fabricius,

Rekne Kamylls, Papires, Scipiouns,  
Notable worthi for many gret victorie;  
Rekne up alle ther othir\* champiouns,  
Cursius, Fabricus famous of memorie.  
But this Regulus eclipseth al ther glorie  
And surmounteth, bi report of renoun,  
Al thes forsaide in comparisoun.

[p. 268]

760

of the rich  
Lucius, Scaurus,  
Caius Delius,  
Æmilius,

Rekne up the foure that whilom wer so riche,  
The firste of them callid Lucius,  
Other tweyne of condicioun liche,  
As was Scavrus & Gayus Delius;  
And forget nat the grete Emelius, —  
But for al ther gret pocessioun,  
Make to Marchus no comparisoun.

764

768

and Crassus,  
whose throat  
the Assyrians  
poured full of  
molten gold.

Remembre on Crassus, of whom it is told,  
The Assiriens to staunche his couetise  
Pored in his throte, strangled hym with gold;  
So he deide, the stori doth deuise.  
And thouh thes foure wendyn ha be wise,  
Gretli comendid thoruh fals oppynyoun,  
Of them to Marchus mak no comparisoun.

772

776

He left his  
freedom and  
wealth behind  
him and died  
for the welfare  
of his country.

Touchyng this Mark, lat men beholde & see:  
He lefte his tresour, his fredam & richesse,  
And for the profit of the comounte  
Forsook his freendis, Bochas berth witnesse;  
To foorthre his toun deied in distresse,  
To keepe his feith resorted to prisoun, —  
Mak of non othir to hym comparisoun.

780

784

752. in] in the R.

759. othir] worthi B, R, J.

762. of] & H, R 3, H 5.

766. condiciouns H.

771, 72 are transposed in R.

771. on] of R.

Myn auctour heer put in remembraunce  
 Summe that hadde gold, stonis & perre,  
 Summe that hadde of riches habundaunce,  
 And of othir that stood in dignite,  
 And summe that hadde worldli prosperite, —  
 Set al aside, & conclude on resoun,  
 Tween them & Marchus is no comparisoun.

Princis may lyue aftir ther ententis,  
 Aftir ther lustis, after ther delices,  
 Of gold & purple were riche garnementis,  
 Aftir ther poweer frowardli in vices,  
 Graunte ther mynistris in cites gret offices, —  
 Tween al ther pompe & veyn ambicioun  
 And atween Mark mak no comparisoun.

Alle these thynges remembred in certeyn,  
 Weel considred & Iput in mynde,  
 Ther wer\* in Rome but fewe such[e] seyn,  
 To comoun profit that founde wer\* so kynde.  
 And, til I may such another fynde  
 In al this book[e], turnyng up-so-doun,  
 I will to hym make no comparisoun.

788 Some men had  
 great riches;  
 others stood in  
 high dignity, or  
 in worldly  
 prosperity.  
 Make no  
 comparison  
 between them  
 and Marcus.

792 Princes may live  
 according to  
 their desires and  
 wear rich  
 garments of  
 gold and purple;  
 but between all  
 their pomp and  
 vain ambition  
 and Marcus  
 make no  
 comparison.

800 Nor will I do  
 so until I find  
 another such.

804

### [Lenvoye.]

THIS tragedie, who þat can take heede,  
 Is entermedlid with wo & gladnesse:  
 Ioie for [the] worshep & synguler manhede  
 That was in Mark bi excellent noblesse;  
 To reede his fall it is gret heuynesse,  
 Which ches to deie, wher-as he stood[e] fre,  
 Onli for profit of the comounte.

To keepe his oth, pleynli, as I reede,  
 Maad in Cartage, ther beyng in distresse,  
 This noble prince constreyned off no neede,  
 But of fre will, myn auctour doth expresse,  
 Fro Rome ageyn[e] thidir gan hym dresse  
 To suffre torment, off his free volunte,  
 Onli for profit of the comounte.

808 In this tragedy  
 are mingled joy  
 for the manhood  
 of Marcus and  
 sorrow for  
 his fall.

812

816 Of his own free  
 will he chose to  
 die for the  
 profit of the  
 community.

786. perre] peerle H. 789. And] of H, R 3.  
 790. aside] on side H. 801. wer] was B, R, J, P.  
 802. wer] was, B, R, J. 808. the] om. R.



His story should  
be crowned with  
golden letters,  
This stori sholde crowned been in deede 820  
With golden lettres, for to bern witnesse,  
How [the] seid Mark, hauyng of deth no dreede,  
To sette Rome fro werre in sekirnesse, —  
Whos hih renoun, most souereyn of prowesse, 824  
May neuer eclipse bi non antiquite,  
Which ches to deie to foorthre the comounte.

and he deserved  
the reward of  
triumph, the  
garment of  
purple fret with  
precious stones  
and the laureate  
wreath of  
victors.  
He disserued for to han the meede 828  
Of tryumphe and marcial worthynesse,  
And of Iubiter to were the purpil weede, .  
Fret ful of stonis, most heuenli of brihtnesse,  
The laureat crown conseruyng his grennesse,  
Graunted to victours, who list considre & see, — 832  
Which ches to deie to foorthre the comounte.

Noble Princes,  
who govern the  
people of this  
world, take heed  
to this story,  
and let Marcus  
be to you a  
mirror.  
Noble Princis, which that gouerne & leede 836  
Al worldli peeple, taketh heed in your hyhnesse  
To this stori, trewe as is the creede,  
Takyng exaample, doth your bisynesse  
Ay to supporte & meynteene rihtwisnesse,  
And lat Marchus to you a merour be,  
Which ches to deie to foorthre the comounte. 840

[How Tholome kyng of Egipt callid Philopater slouh  
fader & moder & his wif in lechery spende his  
lif & mischeuesly ended.]<sup>1</sup>

Next in order,  
Ptolemy  
Philopator, who  
slew his father,  
mother and  
sister, appeared  
complaining to  
Bochas.  
**N**EXT to Bochas in ordre compleynyng, [p. 269]  
Vicious of lyff, ther cam Tholome  
Cald Philopater, & was of Egipt kyng.  
In tendre age borrible cruelte 844  
Slouh fader, mooder & suster, ye may see,  
He to be crownid, it is maad mencionn,  
To regne allone in that regeoun.

He was inclined  
to every vice,  
and murdered his  
wife and spent  
his youth in  
riot and outrage.  
He was disposed onto eueri vice, 848  
Froward to vertu & to al doctryne,  
Slouh his wiff callid Erudice,  
Lefft his spouse, took a concubyne,  
Wasted his lyff, gan hymself encline 852  
To al riot, surfet & outrage;  
And in this wise he spent his yonge age.

822. the] *om.* J.

841. in ordre to Bochas R 3, P. 843. &] that P, H 5.

844. borrible] horrible R, bi horrible H, J, R 3, be horryble,  
H 5, by horrible P. 848. onto] to H. 850. Euridice P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 109 recto.

Thus was disclaundred his roial mageste,  
 In lecherous lustis wachched al [the] niht,  
 A-bedde til noon, ageyn al honeste,  
 Of fals excesse shoop hym anon riht,  
 Whan he aroos, to drynke\* ageyn[els] myht  
 Gorge upon gorge tafforce his lecherie.  
 The longe day he spent in glotonye.

856 Against all  
 decency he lay  
 abed till noon,  
 and stuffed and  
 drank until  
 night to fortify  
 his lust.

I wexe weri the processe for to write  
 Of this tiraunt, vicious and wood.  
 It is contagious the processe to endite,  
 Because thexample doth harm & no good.  
 And of vengauce thus with hym it stood:  
 Of sodeyn myscheff I reede he dide fyne,  
 Enbracid in armys of his concubyne.

860

864 It is tiresome  
 and odious to  
 write about  
 this tyrant.  
 His example  
 does harm and  
 no good. He  
 died suddenly  
 in the arms of  
 his concubine,  
 Agathoclea; and  
 868 she and her  
 son and all  
 their kin were  
 afterwards  
 hanged.

Agothodia pleynli was hir name,  
 And hadde a sone callid Agathodes,  
 Vicious bothe & slaundrid bi diffame,  
 Noised by report, thei wer so rek[el]les.  
 Bothe attonis take in a sodeyn pres,  
 With ther allies alle attonis fett,  
 And bi iust doom lad to the gibett.

872

[How Abithomarus & viridomarus dukis of Fraunce,  
 aftir grete batailles bi Romayns were slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

**N**EXT Philopater, callid Tholome,  
 Per cam in ordre a worthi duk of Fraunce,  
 Abitomarus; & out of that contre  
 Rood into Grece with a gret puissaunce.  
 And first he gan to make his ordenaunce  
 Ageyn Romeyn[els], al-be thei wer ferre,  
 Proudli with them for to gynne a werre.

876 After Ptolemy  
 Philopator  
 came  
 Britomaris,  
 who rode from  
 France into  
 Greece and  
 880 made war on  
 Rome.

But thei of Rome to ther confusioun,  
 Bi ther bisshoppis & preestis gan deuise  
 To vse a cursid fals supersticioun:  
 Vnto ther goddis in ful cruel wise  
 To offre up men banewe sacrefise,

884 The Romans  
 had a cursed  
 custom of  
 burying people  
 alive as an  
 offering to their  
 gods,

856. the] *om.* R.

859. drynken B. 868. Enbracyng in þe Armys H.

869. Agathodia J, Agathoclea P. 874. alle] both H.

878. Britomarus P.

885. fals cursid H, R 3. 887. banewe] bi newe R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 109 verso.

And\* burie hem quyk, in Bochas thus I reede, 888  
Bi a fals hope thei better for to speede.

and now they  
took ten of the  
French and  
Greeks, five  
men and five  
women, and  
sacrificed them;  
but their gods  
were angry.

Of Fraunse & Grece thei took[e] ten in noumbre,  
Halff men & women, togidre tweyne & tweyne;  
And bi fals moordre thei dede hem encoumbre, 892  
Buried hem quik — ther deth was ful sodeyne.  
At this sacrefise the goddis gan disdeyne,  
And to the Romeyns wex contrarius  
For ther fals rihtis supersticious. 896

In this year,  
521 after the  
foundation,  
Rome was  
governed by  
three consuls,

And bi record of olde cronicleres,  
The yeer fyue hundred fro ther fundacioun  
And on & twenti, tho beyng consuleris  
Thre in noumbre, as maad is mencionn,  
Which gouernyd & reuled al the toun. 900  
The firste callid Lucius Emylius,  
And the secounde Catulus Gaius,

who were  
assigned by  
the Senate to  
defend the city.

Attilius Regulus the thridde consuleer. 904  
Bi al the senat ordeyned wer thes thre,  
As I haue told, the silue same yeer  
For to gouerne & reule ther cite,  
And to preserue hem from al aduersite 908  
Ageyn too peeplis, of Gaule & Lumbardie,  
Which than werried of malis & envie.

But there were  
so many  
Lombards and  
other fell  
foreigners,

Of which[e] werre the Romeyns stood in doute,  
The senatours & alle the citeseyns, 912  
Because ageyn them ther cam so gret a route  
Of Lumbardis bi this halff the mounteyns,  
Ioyned togidre with many fell foreyns,  
Which stood departid, as maad is remembraunce, 916  
Fro them of Rome & fro ther obeissaunce.

barbarous and  
savage, and  
unreasonable  
in their fury,

The peeple rud[e], bestial & vnstable,  
Togidre assemblid, wood & furious,  
Of multitude verray innumerable, 920  
Vengable of herte, of corage despitous,  
Void of al resoun, sodenli furious,  
As seith Bochas, I can no ferther gon; —  
Ther soudiours bar gisarmys euerichon. 924

888. And] To B, R, J, P — thus] as H, R 3.

889. thei] the R 3, H 5, P. 894. At] And R.

896. ther] the R.

903. Catalus Caius P. 907. reule] om. R. 908. fro H.

912. 2nd the] their H.

And Gisarmes of Gisarme\* thei wer callid, [p. 270] that the  
Romans stood  
in great dread.  
Toward Rome them hastyng day be day,  
Of gret labour the footmen sore appallid;  
But al\* ther trust on multitude lay. 928

Of whos komyng Roome stood in affray,  
And specialli the consuleris thre,  
That out wer sent to fihte for the cite.

Foure score thousand, as writ the cronycleer, 932 Although each  
consul had an  
army of four  
score thousand  
men, they were  
outnumbered by  
their enemies.  
Mihti [men] to stonden at diffence,  
In his felasheepe hadde ech consuleer.  
And of the Gysarme3 noumbred in sentence,  
Thre hundred thousand, bi sturdi violence 936  
Goyng on foote, I fynde that thei hadde,  
Eihte thousand ouer, that al the feeldis spradde.

I rekne nat them that rood on hors[e]bak, who covered  
the earth with  
their shadow,  
and were led by  
Britomaris and  
Viridomarus. 940  
Which sexe & thretti thousand wer in noumbre,  
Sixe hundred ouer, purposed for the wrak,  
Fynalli the Romeyns to encoumbre.  
The shadwe of them gaff so gret an oumbre,  
That on the soil, which afforn was greene, 944  
Ther was vnnethe any sonne seene.\*

Ther capteyn was Abithomarus,  
A manli man & a ful worthi kniht.  
And with hem wente Virydomarus, 948  
A-nother capteyn, in steel armyd briht.  
Tween them and Romeyns longe laste the fiht;  
But on the parti of Rome the cite  
Was slayn a consul that was oon of the thre. 952

Aftir whos deth, of fortune anon riht,  
On the parti of them of Rome touz  
Eihte\* hundred thousand took hem to the fliht.  
And thus began the fame & the renoun 956  
Of Abithomarus, as maad is menciou, In the battle  
one consul was  
slain, and  
800,000 of the  
Romans fled.  
Of which victorie his herte was maad fayn.  
And on his parti wer thre thousand slayn.

925. Gisarme] Gisarmes B, R, J, P.

928. al] ay B, R, J, P.

933. men] *om.* MSS., P. 934. consuleer] a Consuler H.

935. the] *om.* H, R 3 — number P. 941. hundreth R.

944. which] *bat* H. 945. seene] sheene B, R, J, shene P.

947. worthi] manly H. 952. the] *om.* R.

955. Eihte] viij B, One P. 957. Britomarus P.



Then the  
Romans rallied  
and slew  
40,000  
Gisarmes.

But the Romeyns resorted been ageyn;  
And aftir that hadde a strong bataille. 960  
And in the feeld so manli thei wer seyn,  
And so proudli ther enmyes dide assaille,  
That, as myn auctour mak[e]th rehersaille, 964  
Of the Gisarmes, longe or it was niht,  
Fourti thousand wer slayn in that fiht.

They fought  
once more  
beside the  
Po;

The thridde tyme, with helpe of them of France  
Ioyned to Lombardes & folk of Gaule also, 968  
Thei fauht ageyn, al out off ordenaunce,  
Beside the ryuer that callid is the Poo,  
Wher bothe batailles togidre hadde adoo.  
And, as I fynde, consuleris tweyne 972  
The Romeyn sheltrouns knihtli did ordeyne.

and the  
Romans, led  
by Manlius  
Torquatus and  
Flaminius  
Flaccus, slew  
49,000 of their  
enemies.

Manlius Torquat callid was the ton;  
Flamynus Flakkus was *with hym* ifere:  
And with the Romeyns togidre forth\* thei gon 976  
Toward that ryuer with a ful manli cheere;  
In which bataille, the stori doth vs lere,  
Nyne and fourti thousand slayn on that day  
Of ther enmyes, that non ne wente away. 980

Britomaris was  
made prisoner  
and led to the  
Capitol in  
chains.

Abithomarus was take prisoneer,  
In tokne of tryumphe brouht to Rome toun,  
To the Capitoile, with a ful pale cheer,  
Lad bounde in cheynis, ther geyned no raunsoun: 984  
Thus hath Fortune appallid his hih renoun.  
And in tokne of his disconfiture,  
Offrid to goddis was his cote armuſe.

Atropos broke  
the thread of  
his life.  
Viridomarus was  
slain in the  
field.

Thus Lachesis his lyues threed gan drawe 988  
Til Antropos it brak with ful gret peyne.  
Viridomarus, that was his fellowe,  
Slayn in the feeld bi Romeyns in certeyne.  
And of thes [noble] worthi princis tweyne, 992  
This was the eende & the mortal fall,  
The feeste accomplisshed callid funerall.

973. The] To R. 974. the] þat H.

975. Flamynus] Flamyn R, J.

976. togidre forth] forth togidre B, J, P — forth] forsooth R.

977. that] þe H — ful] om. H. 978. In] I H.

981. Britomarus P — taken H.

988. His lives threde thus Lachesis H, R 3, H 5.

989. ful] om. H. 992. noble] om. MSS., P.

And in the tyme of thes mortal werris  
 Atween thes dukes & them of Rome toun,  
 Many toknis wer shewed in the sterris,  
 Merueilous lihtnyngis fro the heuene doun,  
 And many an vnkouth constellacioun;  
 Sondri cometes dide in the walkyn appeere, —  
 Who seeth ther stories may the trouthe lere.

At the time of  
 these mortal  
 wars many  
 strange tokens  
 were shewn in  
 the stars,  
 marvelous  
 lightnings,  
 comets and  
 uncouth  
 constellations.

The water of Pitene, that renneth in Itaille,  
 Which in that contre is a famous flood,  
 The same hour & tyme of ther bataille,  
 As seith the stori, was turnid into blood.  
 Fires in the hair, most furious & wood,  
 That mihti tours wer with the flawmes brent;  
 Thre moonys appeeryng in the orient.

The waters of  
 a river were  
 turned into  
 blood; fires  
 burnt high in  
 the air; and  
 three moons  
 were seen in the  
 east.

The peple for feer fledde into lowe kauis, [p. 271]  
 For dreed wex pale & dedli of ther cheer;  
 And in thre daies wer thre erthe-quauis.  
 Duryng thes werris and in the same yeer,  
 Of gret Appollo fill doun the pilleeer  
 Of marbil whit, large and of gret strengthe,  
 That sexti cubitis acountid was the lengthe.

The people  
 fled for fear  
 into caves; for  
 in three days  
 there were  
 three earth-  
 quakes, and  
 the marble  
 pillar of great  
 Appollo fell  
 down.

And in that tyme, the stori seith nat nay,  
 Of Rome a consul with a gret puissaunce,  
 Callid Claudius, slouh upon a day  
 Thretti thousand, & brouht hem to myschaunce,  
 Of the soudiours that cam out of Fraunce.  
 And ther was slayn, with many a capteyn lorn,  
 Viridomarus, of whom I spak tofor.

Claudius, a  
 consul, slew  
 30,000 Gauls  
 in battle;

To his gret shame and confusioun,  
 As it is remembred be scripture,  
 The Romeyns made a gret oblacioun  
 Vp to Iubiter of his cote armure.  
 And in tokne of his disconfiture,  
 Withynne that temple, of gold betyn cleer,  
 To his despiht thei heng up his baneer.

and to the  
 shame and  
 confusion of  
 the dead  
 Viridomarus, his  
 coat armour and  
 golden banner  
 were offered as  
 an oblation  
 to Iove.

998. lihtenyng frome H.  
 1000. walkyn] wakyn R.  
 1001. ther] thes R — may] he may H, R 3.  
 1020. the] ther H — cam] om. R.  
 1021. was] om. R — with] & H.

[How Siphax of Munedie kyng was take & deied  
in prisoun.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas next  
speaks briefly  
of the war  
between  
Hannibal and  
worthy Scipio,

**H**EEER Bochas breeffli for a remembrance  
Writeth of werris, debatis & batailes  
That wer þat tyme in Itaille & France, 1032  
In Spaigne, Chaumpayne, with marcial apparailles.  
And among othir in his rehersailles,  
He tellith in Affrik the gret[e] discencioun  
Atween Hanybal & worthi Scipioun. 1036

and then turns  
to Syphax, king  
of Numidia,

He touchith ther namys & abit nat longe;  
Vpon ther stories he bit nat but a while,  
Heer nat rehersyng ther myhti werris stronge, 1040  
Nor of ther stryues he doth heer nat compile,  
But doun descendyng, directeth forth his stile  
For to reherse & telle be writyng  
The fall of Siphax in Munedie kyng.

who defeated  
two kings in  
two battles.  
One of the kings,  
Masinissa,  
was obliged to  
flee from his  
country and  
consort with  
robbers and  
wild beasts and  
live on roots  
and fruit.

This said[e] Siphax batailles hadde tweyne, 1044  
Oon with kyng Gabba, [&] he of verray myht  
Hadde eek another, in which he dede his peyne  
To meete Masmyssa afftir anon riht.  
And bothe kynges he putte to the fliht. 1048  
And of Messulie, I fynde be writyng,  
How Masmyssa was gouvernour & kyng.

This said[e] Siphax thoruh his cheualrie  
Maad Masmyssa to fleen his regioun, 1052  
Constreynyng hym to lyue be robberie,  
To walke in forestis with beestis up & doun.  
And for diffaute, as maad is mencion, 1056  
To saue his liff he fond no bet reffut,  
But fedde hymself on rootes & on frut.

Even his name  
was forgotten in  
his own land.

Out of his reum Masmyssa was enchaced,  
And constreyned to fleen from his contre;  
Fro mynde of folk his name was out raced, 1060  
For no man wiste wher he sholde be.  
His liegemen & folk of his cite,  
Thoruh al Affrik knew no bettir reed  
Off his persone, but dempte that he was ded. 1064

1031. of] *om.* J — bataill H.

1032. &] & in H, R 3. 1033. apparaile H, R 3, H 5.

1034. rehersaile H, rehersaill R 3. 1038. nat] *om.* R.

1040. heer nat] nat her H. 1043. Numedy P.

1045. Gabba] Galba H, R 3, Gala P, Gabla H 5 — &] *om.* R, J.

1047. Masinissa P. 1049. Massile P. 1053. be] in R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 110 recto.

Thus of kyng Siphax encrece gan the glorie,  
Which bi force too kynges hath outraied,  
And upon them wonnen the victorie,  
Put hem to fliht & the peeple affraied;  
That Rome & Cartage wer of hym dismaied.  
And ech of them dede ther labour  
Of ther werris to make hym *gouernour*.

Vnto [this] Siphax, out of Rome toun,  
As it is write for a memoriall,  
To Numedie was sent Scipioun  
For this mateer in especiall.  
Out of Cartage was sent Hastruball;  
And at the castell wher Siphax lay,  
Bothe tweyne arryued at o day.

And be pleyn writyng as I haue conceyued,  
And as the stori remembreth in sentence,  
At ther comyng bothe wer resceyued  
Of kyng Siphax with gret[e] reuerence.  
And thoruh his notable manli dilligence,  
As it is Iwrityn be record,\*  
He made thes capteyns hertili of accord,

That thei togidre lay the same niht,  
Thei hadde of Siphax so gret surete,  
Be promys maad, as he was trewe kniht,  
That nouthur of them sholde deceyued be.  
But ther was founde ful gret duplicite  
Folwyng afftir, who-so can take heede,  
Lik as this storie shal deuise in deede.

For bi the fraude & falsnesse most mortall  
Compassed befor[e]n, it is thus befalle,  
That bi the sleihte of this Hastruball, —  
As Affrican[els] be nih double alle,  
Vnder sugre can hide weel ther galle, —  
So Hastruball bi fals decepcioun  
Vnder fair cheer deceyued Scipioun.

He brouht in Siphax bi fals sotilte,  
And bi his sleihti peynted fair langage,  
That he sholde with hym allied bee,  
Be ful assent to hauen in mariage

Thus the glory  
of Syphax  
increased; and  
both Rome and  
Carthage  
sought to make  
1068 him their  
general.

1072 From Rome  
Scipio was sent  
to him, from  
Carthage  
Hadrubal.

1076

Both were  
received with  
1080 great respect;

1084

both were given  
the same  
promise.

1088

1092

[p. 272] But by the  
duplicity of  
Hadrubal,

1096

1100 Syphax was  
promised  
Sophonisba in  
marriage, and  
thereby induced  
to side with  
Carthage.

1066. hath] had R. 1072. this] *om.* R, J, P  
1084. record] good record B, R, J, P.  
1096. double nyh H, doubill nyh R 3.  
1100. fals] his H, R 3, hys H 5.



Sophonisba, a maiden of Cartage, 1104  
Which was douhtir, yong & fa[i]r withal,  
As seith Bochas, to this Hastrubal.

Scipio was  
deceived, The which[e] thyng be craft was brouht aboute 1108  
And acomplisshe[d] verrailly in deede.  
And bi this mene, pley[n]li out of doute,  
Ther first began rancour & hatreede,  
Symulacioun, feynyng & falsheede,  
That atween Siphax & Hastrubal, alas, 1112  
Scipioun was deceyued in this caas.

After his  
marriage,  
Syphax  
and Hasdrubal  
made war on  
the Romans; And aftir that doon was this mariage,  
Siphax ful enmy vnto\* Sipioun,  
With Hastrubal rood into Cartage 1116  
And gan werreie ageyn[e]s Roome toun.  
And in this while, as maad is mencion,   
Kyng Masmyssa out of wildirnesse  
Toward Scipioun in al haste gan hym dresse. 1120

and Masinissa,  
joining forces  
with Scipio, With his peeple gan to make hym strong  
Thoruh help of Scipioun & of Bellius,  
Wente ageyn Siphax, & abood nat long,  
His herte ageyn hym was so envious. 1124  
And on a day, the stori tellith thus,  
With Affricanys & folkis of Cartage,  
Siphax the Romeyns mette in the visage.

helped him take  
vengeance on  
Syphax, who  
was captured Of Masmyssa the peeple wer so wood 1128  
Vpon Siphax auengid for to bee,  
Thoruh ther batailles cam to hym ther he stood,  
And maugre hym and [al] his cruelfe,  
Of verray manhod — space was non to flee — 1132  
Thei brouhte hym hom thoruh ther hih renoun  
Into the handis of worthi Scipioun.

and led  
prisoner to  
Rome. Siphax was take thus or he was war,  
Vndir his baneer, maugre al his myht, 1136  
And into Rome lad afforn the chaar  
Off Scipioun, the noble worthi kniht,  
That wan the tryumphe, grauntid hym of riht.  
And Sophonisba, afforn to Siphax wiff, 1140  
Weddid to Masmysse at theende of al this striff.

1114. And] Anoon H, Anon R 3. 1115. vnto] to this B, R, J.

1116. into] in R.

1122. 2nd of] om. H. 1127. mett be Romayns H.

1128. wer] was R, H. 1130. bataille H.

1131. al] om. R, J. 1141. Masmyssa H.

Loo, how Fortune chaunge can hir tides!  
 To oon this day she can be fauourable,  
 Make capteyns & thes grete guides,  
 Which wende ha founde hir wheel ferme & stable.  
 But that she is ay froward & chaungable,  
 Freendli to-day, to-morwe at discord, —  
 Yiff this be trewe, Siphax can ber record.

Sophonisba then  
 married  
 Masinissa.  
 Lo, how  
 Fortune can  
 change, —  
 friendly to-day,  
 to-morrow at  
 discord, as  
 Syphax can  
 testify,

1144

1148

This Siphax was sent out of the toun  
 In cheynys bounde withoute mor tarieng,  
 And at Tiburny lay fetrid in prisoun,  
 Deied at myscheeff, made ther his eendying.  
 And for because that he was a kyng,  
 The Romeyns made, of marcial pite,  
 Hym to be buried withynne ther cite.

for he died a  
 prisoner and  
 was buried in  
 Rome.

1152

[How Nabyn hauyng no title but bi tiramye took  
 on him to be kyng of Macedoyne was slayne.]<sup>1</sup>

**N**EXT cam Nabyn, ful pitousli weepyng,  
 Tofor Iohn Bochas, which be tirannye  
 Off Macedoyne took on hym to be kyng,  
 Hauyng no title sauff title of robberie,  
 Onli bi force hymself to magnefie;  
 Which with strong hand took fals\* pocessioun  
 For to be crownyd in thilke regioun.

1156

Next appeared  
 Nabis, who,  
 without title,  
 took upon  
 him to be king  
 of Macedonia,

1160

This Macedoyne, as be old writyngis,  
 Whilom was had in ful gret reuerence,  
 Because onli it floured in too thynges,  
 Bothe in knighthod & souereyn sapience;  
 Mars ther bi manhod, Pallas be prudence:  
 And whil thes tweyne hadde gouernaunce,  
 Of al weelfare thei hadde suffisaunce.

1164

a country that  
 flowered in both  
 knighthood and  
 wisdom.

1168

And whil the noblesse of thes thynges tweyne,  
 That is to seyne, the flour of hih clergie,  
 The hih renoun most famous & souereyne  
 Of marcial prowesse & of cheualrie,  
 Gouerned that lond bi prudent\* policie,  
 Than stood that kyngdam, auctours reherse konne,  
 Among the Greekis lik an heuenli sonne.

1176

So long as  
 these two  
 things lasted,  
 that kingdom  
 was as a sun  
 to Greece.

1172

1144. thes] othir H. 1145. ferme] firme R — ferme &] om. J, P.

1156. Nabis P. 1158. to] om. R. 1146. that] om. R.

1161. fals] ful B, R, J. 1163. Lacedemoine P.

1167. Pallas] Pallas ther H.

1174. prudent] newe B, J, P, new R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf III recto.

But finally its  
light was  
darkened, when  
covetousness  
and tyranny  
entered,

But at the laste eclipsed was the liht  
Bothe of knihthod and philosophie,  
Whan couetise gan entren ageyn riht  
For to vsurpe upon the regalie,  
By\* intrusioun of fals[e] tirannye,  
And bextort force made ther entrynges,  
Hauyng no tittle ther to\* regne as kynges.

[p. 273]

1180

chief cause why  
the noblesse of  
Greece was  
brought low.

This was cheef cause, for short conclusioun,  
That the noblesse of Grece was brouht[e] bas,  
And Macedoyne brouht to confusioun  
Be couetise, that set hem in such caas,  
Wherby\* ther knihthod fulli translatid was  
And ther policie, in cronicle ye may see,  
Out of Grece to Rome the cite.

1184

1188

One of their  
tyrants was  
Nabis, hated by  
Rome

And among other, bi cleer remembra[un]ce,  
Of such tirauntis bi ordre rehersyng,  
Nabyn was oon, that hadde gouernaunce  
In Macedoyne, & was ther crownyd kyng,  
Withoute tittle falsli ther regnyng.  
And for his froward contagious cruelte  
He was behatid of Rome the cite.

1192

1196

as well as by  
his own subjects.  
He was first  
attacked  
by Titus  
Flaminius,

The Romeyns sente a myhti consuleer,  
Titus Flaminius, of ther werris guide;  
To Macedoyne he gan approche neer,  
Toward Argos wher Nabyn dede abide,  
Of entent[e] for tabate his pride.  
But whil Nabyn stood hiest in estat,  
Of Grece his lieges wer with hym at debat.

1200

1204

and in the  
end overthrown  
by Philopomen  
and slain by  
Alexamenus.

A duk Icallid P[h]ilopomones,  
With the peeple that duëllid in Grece-lond,  
To stryue with Nabyn put hymself in pres,  
Disconfited hym, fihthyng hond of hond;  
And at gret myscheeff, ye shal vndirstond,  
Alexamenes, a kniht of that contre,  
Slouh this Nabyn, the cronicle ye may see.

1208

1177. 2nd the] ther H.

1181. By] But B, R, J.

1182. force] wrong H, R 3.

1183. to] for to B, R 3.

1184. cheef] om. H.

1188. Whereby] Therbi B, R, J.

1205. A] And R.

1209. at] a H 1211. cronicle] story H.

[Here Bochas reherceth the mortal werrys betwix  
Romayns & Affricanys.]<sup>1</sup>

¶ Afftir this Nabyne, Bochas doth proceede  
To telle the werris & the mortal stryues.

1212 Bochas now  
proceeds to tell  
about the wars  
between Rome  
and Carthage.

Tween Romeyns & Affricanys in deede,  
Wherbi ful many loste ther her lyues.

Caused wydwes, maydnes & eek wyues

1216

To weepe and waile, in such disioynt thei stood,  
On outhir parti to seen the losse of blood.

For the parti of them off Roome toun

Wer maad capteyns & dyuers officeres,

Which into Affrik with peeple wer sent doun.

And specialli ther wer too consuleeris,

Notable in armys and famous in tho yeeris:

Marcus Manlius, born of the Romeyn lyne;

The tothir callid Lucyus Consoryne.

Among the  
Roman captains  
1220 were Marcus  
Manlius, Lucius  
Censorinus and  
Scipio.

1224

With them was sent a tribun ful notable,

Of whom tofforn I made mencion,

For the werris most worthi & most hable,

1228

I meene of Rome prudent Scipion,

Which of ther cite was cheuest champioun,

Of hool entent thaffricanys tanoye,

And specialli Cartage to destroye.

1232

And nih be Cartage ther was a cite strong,

Mihtili bilt, & stood upon the se,

The wallis thikke, round[e], squar & long,

Cheeff diffense callid of that contre,

To saue & keepe hem from al aduersite.

And fourti cubitis, with crestis marcial,

Lik as I fynde, of heihte was the wal.

Near by  
Carthage  
was a strong  
city upon the  
sea, the chief  
1236 defence of  
that country.

And in the frount, reised for the werre,

Of stonis squar[e] was an hih dongoun

Callid Birsā; fro which wonder ferre

Men myhte beholde the contres enviroun.

And, as I reede, for ther sauacioun

Thaffricanys of purpos did ordeyne

For ther capteyns Hastrubalis tweyne.

1240 In it was a  
high keep  
called Byrsa.  
The Africans  
chose two  
Hasdrubals to  
be their  
1244 captains.

1215. Wherbi] Therbi R.

1217. thei] the R. 1225. Censoryne P.

1231. the Affricans P.

1242. from R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf III recto.



Scipio laid  
siege to Byrsa  
and broke down  
part of the wall,

The said[e] dongoun, myhtili bailed,  
Ageyn al sautis to stonden & endure: 1248  
But worthi Scipioun, for al that, hath nat failed  
For taproche & doon bi besi cure,  
With his engynes myhti, strong & seure;  
So that be force, this kniht most marciall, 1252  
A gret quantite brak doun of the wall.

while Lucius and  
Marcus went  
forth to give  
battle to  
one of the  
Hasdrubals,

And Lucyus, callid Sensoryne,  
Departid is with Marcus Manlius,  
And bi the counsail of Scipioun & doctryne, 1256  
Bothe of assent, in armis vertuous,  
Thei took ther way, myn auctour tellith thus,  
With Hastrubal, sothli & thei myhte,  
Wher as he lay that same day to fihte. 1260

whom they  
defeated and  
slew together  
with 40,000  
Carthaginians  
in Cirrha.

Thes consuleris assailed the cite [p. 274]  
Callid Cirie, & beet adoun the wall,  
Slouh fourti thousand, the cronicle ye may see,  
Of Affricannys be vengauunce ful mortall. 1264  
And ther constable callid Hastruball  
Was slayn that day bi them\*, it is no doute,  
That he most trustid & next wer hym aboute.

In the mean-  
while Scipio  
entered Carthage  
and took all  
the inhabitants  
prisoner,

And in this while, most manli of corage, 1268  
The worthi tribun, Publius Scipioun,  
Bi verray force is entrid in Cartage;  
And sixe daies, as maad is menciou, n,  
He and his knihtis constreyned so the toun, 1272  
That disespiered, with ther dedli cheeris,  
Thei of the toun yald[e] hem prisoneeris,

who begged that  
they might be  
allowed to live  
in servage and  
pay the Romans  
a tribute.

Meekli requeryng vnto Scipioun,  
To resceyue hem in this mortal rage; 1276  
That men & wommen duellyng in that toun  
With the citeseyns, yong & old of age,  
Mihthe abide & lyuen in seruage  
Vnder the Romeyns, ther was no bet reffut, 1280  
And yeer bi yeer paie hem a tribut.

1248. assautis H.

1251. engynes] Inmyes H. 1253. the] ther H.

1254. Censoryne H. 1259. Hasdruball P.

1262. Cyrra P.

1266. them] hym B, R, him J, P.

1273. dispeired R.

1278. the] om. H.

And of Affrik the tothir Hastruball,  
Which among hem afforn was crownid kyng,  
Lefft his estat and his poweer roiall,  
Yald hym prisoneer, humbeli knelyng.  
And his wiff most pitousli weepyng,  
Whan that she sauh hir lord was take so,  
Ran inta\* fire & brent hirsilff for wo.

1284 The other  
Hasdrubal gave  
himself up to  
the Romans;  
and his wife  
ran into a fire  
for sorrow and  
burnt herself  
up.

Sixe and twenti thousand, as I fynde,  
Wer lad of wommen into captyuyte;  
Thretti thousand of men cam behynde,  
Take prisoneres in gret aduersite.  
And seunteene daies brente that cite,  
That in ther wallis was non so harde ston,  
But into pouder it was brent anon.

1288 26,000 women  
and 30,000 men  
were captured,  
and the city  
destroyed.

And this was doon, breeffli to conclude,  
Bi the prowess of Publius Scipioun.  
Sold in seruage was a gret multitude;  
Ther old[e] lordis lad fetrid to prisoun.  
This was of Cartage fynal destruccioun, —  
To write ther compleyntis Bochas abit no while,  
But into Grece turneth ageyn his stile,

1292

1296 It was by the  
prowess of  
Publius Scipio  
that the fall  
of Carthage  
was accom-  
plished.

[How kyng Perseus bi Romayns was outraied &  
after taken.]<sup>1</sup>

**I**N Lacedemoyne remembryng o[f] a kyng  
Callid Perseus, a ful proud werreieur,  
Cleymyng a title, upon hym vsurpyng  
For to succede as trewe enheritour  
To grete Alisandre, most myhti conquerour,  
Fulli affermyng, ageyn a certeyn day  
He wil be crowned maugre who seith nay.

1304 There was once  
a king of  
Sparta named  
Perseus, who  
usurped the  
crown after the  
death of  
Alexander.

And his name to putte in memorie,  
Caste in his persone renewe the prowess  
Of kyng Alisaundre, & tencrece his glorie,  
To folwe his tracis in kniethod & noblesse.  
And first of alle, of hasti wilfulnesse,  
That his conquest myhte sprede ferre,  
Gan of purpos with Romeyns to haue werre.\*

1308

1312 He first made  
war on Rome,  
for he was  
ambitious to  
follow in  
Alexander's  
footsteps;

1288. inta] in to the R, into B, P, in to J, into a R 3, in taffryk  
H 5.

1289. twenti] thritty H. 1301. compleynt H.

1304. Parseus R. 1305. title] tithe H. 1309. seith] say H.

1316. werre] a werre B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 111 verso.

but when he realized the power of the Romans he grew afraid and sent envoys to make peace.

But aftir this he was bet auised,  
Whan he parceyued the marcial apparaille  
Of the Romeyns, wheroff he was agrised,  
Wex afferd ther noblesse to assaille, 1320  
Which ay wer founde victorious in bataille.  
And wher he had afforn\* be rek[e]les,  
Sent enbassatours with them to trete of pes.

The Romans saw how presumptuous he was, and sent Sulpicius, who treated his embassy with contempt.

Thei hadde apparceyued his presumpcioun, 1324  
And how he was proud and surquedous.  
Sent a consul with a gret poweer down,  
The name of whom was Sulpicius,  
Which dedli hatid the said[e] Perseus, 1328  
Thoruh hertli rancour ageyn hym wex soleyn,  
Of his ambassiat hauyng but disdeyn.

Paulus Æmilius was also sent against him by Rome; and the night after his arrival the moon eclipsed,

And ther parti for to fortefie  
With the said consul Sulpicius, 1332  
Thei sent another, expert in cheualrie,  
A consul also, Paulus Emylius,  
Among Romeyns notable & famous.  
And folwyng aftir, the silue same niht, 1336  
The moone eclipsed fulli of his liht.

a token that Perseus should be vanquished.

A cleer tokne, as maad is menciuon,  
That kyng Perseus should haue a sharp[e] shour,  
And that his lordshepe & his regeoun 1340  
Sholde been oppressid, void of al socour,  
And that Macedonoys shold haue no fauour  
Ageyn the Romeyns togidre whan thei mette  
With round[e] speris & suerdis sharpe whette. 1344

Perseus was put to flight by a young knight called Cato;

The day of bataille, to his ences of glorie, [p. 275]  
For the parti of them off Rome toun,  
Ther was a kniht that caused the victorie,  
Yong, fressh and lusti, & callid was Catoun, 1348  
Which brouht ther enmyes to confusioun;  
For Macedonoys thoruh his gret[e] myht  
Outraied wern, & Perseus put to fliht.

and afterwards he and his two sons were made prisoners by a captain called Octavius.

But Emylius, the noble consuleer, 1352  
Sente a capteyn callid Octauyus  
To pursue affir in coostis ferr & neer  
The proude kyng, this said[e] Perseus.

1322. he had afforn] afforn he hadde B, R, J, afore he had P.

1330. enbassat R, H, R 3, Ambassat J, embassade P.

1342. fauour] socour R.

1353. callid is repeated in H.

And he was take, for ther was no rescus,  
 With his sonis, that wer in noubre tweyne,  
 Phelipp, Alisaundre, the stori is certeyne. 1356

**M**YN auctour heer tellith of kynges manye,  
 Thretti in noubre: the firste Geramus, 1360  
 Which haue regned *withyne* Macedonye;\*  
 And laste of alle was this Perseus.

My author says  
 that thirty kings  
 reigned in  
 Macedonia, and  
 that Perseus was  
 the last of them.

The noubre of yeeris, Bochar writeth thus,  
 Was nyne hundrid, as is remembred heer,  
 Space of ther regnyng, *with* foure & tuenti yeer. 1364

Aftir translatid was the regeoun,  
 With al ther iles, vnto thobeissaunce  
 Of them of Rome, withoute excepcioun;  
 The\* grete lordis that wer of most puissaunce 1368  
 Abood[e] ther long vndir gouernaunce,  
 And Perseus, disconsolat of cheer,  
 Duryng his lyff abood ther prisoneer. 1372

They reigned  
 924 years, and  
 afterwards their  
 country was  
 translated to  
 Rome.

[How the peple of Achaia, *with* ther cheef Cite  
 Corynthe by Romayns was destroyed.]<sup>1</sup>

**T**HUS the lordshepe wered out & spent  
 Of Macedoyne, as maad is mencioniun.  
 Ther wer too contres therto adiacent,  
 The ton Achaia, a litil regeoun,  
 And Spartanoy\* goyng enviroon,  
 Mihti of peple and of gret substaunce,  
 In oon confederat & of oon alliaunce.

There were two  
 countries near  
 Macedonia,  
 Achaea and  
 Sparta, which  
 were bound  
 together in an  
 alliance.

Thei wer conioyned & bothe maad al oon  
 Bi a maner feithful convencioun. 1380  
 And when the Romeyns knew hem for ther foon,  
 Hauyng ther frenshipec in suspecioun,  
 Thei caste to make a disiunccioun 1384  
 Atween thes londis, in breede & eek in lengthe;  
 For thyng disseuered is menused of his strengthe.

As they were  
 enemies of  
 Rome, the  
 Romans sought  
 to sow dis-  
 sension between  
 them;

Ordeyned cites and toun[e]s heer & yonder,  
 Wheron the Romeyns gan make a decre, 1388  
 That ther lordshepes sholde be sette assonder,

but the people  
 threatened to  
 rise against the  
 Roman  
 messengers,

1359. tellith heer R, J, telleth here P. 1361. Macedoyne B.

1369. The] To B, J, P.

1377. Spartanoy] Spathanoy B, Spatanoy R, H, R 3, Spatanoy J.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 112 recto.



Which made the peeples in eueri gret cite,  
 Whan thei knew ther fals subtilite,  
 To rise attonys, most cruel of ther cheeris, 1392  
 And wolde ha slayn the Romeyn massageris.

and finally the  
 Romans, losing  
 patience, sent  
 down a consul  
 called Mummius  
 against Achaea.  
 And fynalli bi this occasioun  
 Romeyns ageyn hem gan wexen furious,  
 Took hardynesse off ther dyuisioun; 1396  
 And a consul callid Munius,  
 A manli kniht, in armis ful famous,  
 Into Achaia was fro Roome sent  
 It to destroye bi gret ausement. 1400

The Achaeans  
 in their pride  
 entered the  
 field without  
 preparation,  
 and set their  
 wives and  
 women on a  
 high mountain  
 to see the battle.  
 Thei of Achaia bi ther negligence,  
 And bi ther froward wilful reklesnesse,  
 Of verray pride list make no diffence;  
 Thouhte themsilff, withoute auisynesse, 1404  
 Off poweer able, & strengre in sothnesse  
 Than wer[e] Romeyns, veraili in deede:  
 Thus wer thei stroied afforn or thei took heede.

Thei stood in hope in ther sturdynesse 1408  
 Bi that bataille to haue had gret pillage,  
 Of the Romeyns to ha[ue] won[n]e gret richesse.  
 And for a pompe, of wilful fals dotage  
 Thei took ther wyues and wommen yong off age, 1412  
 And set hem up on an hih mounteyn,  
 That ther manhod myhte in the feeld be seyn.

But the Romans  
 slew their  
 troops like  
 cattle and  
 carried off the  
 women and  
 children to  
 Rome.  
 Whan the Romeyns mette hem in bataille,  
 Thei dispurueied and out off ordenaunce, 1416  
 Slayn lik beestis, ther poweer gan to faille,  
 Of froward pride & rekles gouernaunce,  
 That Achaia was brouht to myschaunce;  
 Wommen and childre, for sorwe almost mad, 1420  
 To lyue in seruage wer to Rome lad.

Corinth was  
 destroyed, chief  
 market of its  
 time;  
 Corynthe that tyme was ther cheef cite,  
 Destroyed be Romeyns & brouht vnto ruyne,  
 Which among citees, in Bochas ye may see, 1424  
 Aboue alle othir dide in honour shyne;  
 Of alle sciences ther floured the doctrine,  
 And of crafftis artificeres most wise,  
 Rekne al the world, ther was cheef marchau[n]dise. 1428

Thus vnwarli in ther most noblesse,  
 Sittyng of Fortune on the [hihest] stage,  
 Thei wer destroyed of tresor & richesse,  
 Brouhte to nouht bi slauhtre & pillage,  
 Ther wallis broke in that cruel rage.  
 And in that brennyng, Bochar seith, the leuene  
 Rauht a gret part upward to the heuene.

[p. 276] and Bochas says  
 that the flames  
 rose high in  
 the sky.

1432

Pleyn with the erthe the wallis broke down,  
 The peple slayn merciles, yong & old;  
 And ther was maad a gret dyuisioun:  
 Summe lad in seruage, & somme of them wer sold.  
 Images of coper, of syluer & of gold  
 Wer sodenli, in al that violence,  
 Togidre molte, so hoot was the feruence.

1436 The walls were  
 levelled and the  
 people  
 mercilessly slain  
 or sold into  
 bondage.

1440

Of which metal thus afftir it is fall,  
 Gold, siluer, coper, medlid into oon,  
 Coper of Corynthe men sothli dede it call,  
 Thoruh al the world of custum euerichon.  
 Fame of which metal is so ferr Igon,  
 That the vessellis forgid of the same  
 Corynthoise Icallid is by\* name.

1444 The statues of  
 bronze and  
 the images of  
 gold and silver  
 melted and  
 flowed together  
 into a mixture  
 afterwards  
 called Copper  
 of Corinth.

1448

¶ Afftir Corynthe was thus brent to nouht,  
 A prynce callid Philipp Philermene  
 To Iohn Bochas hath his compleynt brouht,  
 In whos face and cheer it was weel seene,  
 The woful constreynt of his mortal teene.  
 And he was whilom, Bochas doth specefie,  
 Lord of a cite callid Vallaquye.

1452 After the  
 destruction of  
 Corinth,  
 Philip  
 Philermene  
 made his  
 complaint to  
 Bochas.

1456

Marcus Actilius took hym prisoneer,  
 Brouht hym to Roome, list hym nat respite.  
 ¶ Next\* to [Iohn] Bochas, with an heuy cheer,  
 Appeerid a duc\* callid Democrite.  
 Of Etholis, myn auctour doth so write,  
 He was cheeff lord; but he & his contre  
 Translatid wern to Roome the cite.

1460 He was brought  
 prisoner to  
 Rome by  
 Marcus Atilius,  
 as was also  
 Duke  
 Democritus  
 of Etolia,

1430. of Fortune on the hihest] hihest of Fortune in the H, P,  
 hihest of Fortune on the R 3, H 5 — on] in J, R — hihest]  
 hih R.

1441. that] ther R. 1444. medlid] Ioyned H, R 3.

1449. callid H, called P — by] the B, R, J.

1459. The paragraph mark is misplaced before the next line, B —  
 John] om. R, J, P, H 5, R 3 — an] om. H, R 3, H 5.

1460. duc] kniht B, R, J, P — Domocrite R, J, Damocrite P.

1461. Elholoys H.

who escaped  
once and,  
retaken, went  
mad and slew  
himself.

This duk was cast and cheyned in prisoun, 1464  
Escapid onys, in stori as I fynde,  
Take ageyn, throwe in a derk dongoun,  
Ther for sorwe wente out of his mynde,  
Slouh hymself at myscheeff ageyns kynde — 1468  
Loo, hou thes princis proud & rek[e]les  
Haue shamful eende, which cannat lyue in pes!

[How grete Anthiocus vsyng riot and viciuos lyu-  
yng/ bi marchus Actilius was outraied & deied  
sodenly.]<sup>1</sup>

The story of  
Seleucus and  
Antiochus,  
of Laodicea and  
the ring

**T**OUCHYNG þe stori in ordre heer folwyng  
Of Seleuchus & gret Anthiochus, 1472  
Off his mooder Laodices & þe ryng,  
With other toknes & signes merueillous,  
And how also the famous\* Seleuchus  
Hadde in his theih, as writen is heer-toform, 1476  
Preent of an anker the day whan he was born,

and the print of  
the anchor,  
which descended  
to all the  
children, was  
told in the  
Fourth Book.

And al the childre bi successioun  
Hadde be discent, bor[e]n of his lynage,  
Preent of an anker, as maad is menciou[n], 1480  
The fourte book, with al the surplusage  
Of othir toknis ther told in pleyn langage.  
And of the seide same Seleuchus  
Cam be discent the saide Antiochus. 1484

Another  
Antiochus,  
a descendant of  
Seleucus,

Whos herte was set of hih[e] couetise  
To folwe his lustis and delectacioun[s];  
And specialli he caste gan & deuise,  
To wynne in Grece dyuers regions. 1488  
And of the peeple he cauhte occasiouns,  
Bi ther fauour to conquere that\* contre  
And to rebelle ageyn Rome the cite.

rebelled against  
the Romans and  
conquered many  
of their towns  
in Greece;

With multitude & gret apparaille 1492  
He gat in Grece castellis & eek touns  
Longyng to Roome, conquered be bataille;  
Took upon hym in his presumpciouns  
Falsli to folwe the inclynaciouns 1496  
Of his berthe, whil he dede abide  
In a cite that callid was Calcide.\*

1475. famous] same B. 1480. an] om. R.

1483. same saide H. 1486. delectacioun R.

1490. that] ther B, R. 1498. Talcide B, R, J, Ealcide H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 112 verso.

For cause of slouthe he leffte his cheualrie,  
 Forsook[e] Mars & took hym to Cupide,  
 Restyng the wyntir, he spent in lecherie,  
 In wach and riot, ches Venus to his guide:  
 Sensualite maad resoun stonde aside;  
 And bi thes menys, for short conclusioun,  
 He was conveied to his destruccioun.

1500 but he soon  
 grew slothful,  
 and, forsaking  
 Mars, betook  
 himself to  
 Cupid, and  
 spent the winter  
 in lechery.

And whan that wyntir *with* his frostis colde  
 Ipassid was and al his stormys keene,  
 In riot spent and wastid, as I tolde,  
 And ver cam in *with* his newe greene,  
 And fressh[e] Flora, which is of flouris queene,  
 Off custum gynneth hir motles out to dresse, —  
 In which[e] sesoun, as auctours alle expresse,

1508 When spring  
 came with  
 Flora and her  
 fresh flowers,

Kynges, princis, with marcial apparaille,  
 Tyme whan Phebus in the Ram doth shyne,  
 Thei hem dispose to gon out to bataille,  
 For exercise of marcial disciplyne.  
 And down fro Roome, expert in that doctryne,  
 Descendid is Marchus Actilius  
 Ageyn this vicious proude Anthiochus.

[p. 277] and Phoebus  
 shone in the  
 Ram, Marcus  
 Attilius  
 descended  
 down from  
 Rome with his  
 army,

This noble Mark, preued in armis weel,  
 Which in his tyme was soo good a kniht,  
 With al his hoost[e], armyd in briht steel,  
 Ageyn Antiochus cam to the feeld down riht,  
 Vpon a morwe whan Phebus shon ful briht.  
 Set his watdeyns be capteyns that he ches  
 Vpon an hill callid Termophiles.

1520

1524

Antiochus upon the tothir side,  
 Whom glotonye & riot dede oppresse,  
 And dronke Bachus, which *with* hym dide abide,  
 With Morpheus wiff, of slombre cheeff goddesse, —  
 Which caused hym thoruh slouthe & idilnesse  
 That prouidence out of his court was gon,  
 Causyng that day the slaughtre of many on.

1528 and the  
 gluttonous,  
 riotous  
 Antiochus was  
 defeated and  
 forced to flee

1532

Whan the consul, Marchus, the worthi knyht,  
 His aduersaries proudli gan assaille,  
 Thei vnpurueied, took hem to the fliht;  
 Disaraied thei myhte nat auaile.  
 Thus Anthiochus fledde out of bataille;

1536



For ageyn Romeyns he myht nat endure:  
Therefore on hym fill the disconfiture.

1540

to Ephesus.  
He tried to  
make peace, but  
was rebuffed.

Thus rebukid fledde to Ephesie,  
Ferr in Grece, and ther to duelle he ches,  
Sente Romeyns a gret embassatrie  
With said[e] Marchus for to trete of pes.  
But his\* embassiat, this verray dout[e]les,  
Whan thei atteyned of Marchus the presence,  
Wer refusid & hadde non audience.

1544

Greatly  
mortified, he  
then began a  
war against  
Rome on the  
sea

Of which Antiochus gretli was a-shamed,  
Caste ageyn Roome of hate & enmyte  
To reise a poweer, & hath of newe attamyd  
To gadre shippis & make a gret arme,  
Gynne a werre ageyn hem on the se,  
Hauyng an hope, vnder a coward dreede,  
Bet on the watir than on the lond to speede.

1548

1552

and was  
beaten three  
times.

Made his shippis be stuffed with vitaille,  
And his capteyns han the lond forsake;  
But whan the Romeyns gan hym of newe\* assaille,  
His shippis brent & al his stuff was take.  
And lik myn auctour compendiously doth make,  
Thries on the se the Romeyns werreyng,  
He was outraied, the stori witnessyng.

1556

1560

Once more he  
fought the  
Romans on  
land with  
chariots set  
with scythes,

Yit efft ageyn to his confusioun  
Vpon the lond[e] he gan make\* hym strong,  
Mette with Corneli callid Scipioun,  
With waynes, cartes maad for the werre long,  
Shod with hard iren, sharp sithes set among  
In trauers wise bi gret ordenaunce;  
But for al that, he was brouht to myschaunce.

1564

1568

and elephants,  
and again he  
was compelled  
to flee and was  
finally obliged  
to pay a  
tribute to  
Rome.

With olyfauntis & castellis on the[r] bak  
That day was slayn many a worthi kniht,  
Vpon his host so cruel was the wrak,  
That he constreyned took hym to the fliht,  
Forsook the contre, fledde out of mennys siht.  
To the Romeyns, he coude it nat delaie,  
Ech yeer constreyned a tribut for to paie.

1572

1544. of] *om.* R. 1545. his] in this B, R, J, P.  
1548. which] *pe* which H. 1551. the shippis R.  
1554. In reading MS. H., turn back to leaf 105.  
1557. gan hym of newe] of newe gan hym B, R, J, P.  
1563. maken B. 1565. the] their H.  
1569. their] the R, J. 1572. hym to] vn to H.  
1573. the] his H.

But he of fraude, because of his tribut  
 For couetise feyned sore pouerte,  
 Gadred robbours, & be fals pursut  
 Oppressid marchauntis, spoiled the contre,  
 Robbed templis, of hatful cruelte,  
 And fro Iubiter callid Dodonyan\*  
 Took alle the reliques, the story telle can.

1576 He then began  
 to rob mer-  
 chants and  
 temples,

Dide sacrilege & entrid in that cloos  
 Withoute reuerence or any obseruaunce,  
 For which the temple ageyn[es] hym aroos,  
 And, as it is put in remembraunce,  
 Bi the goddis ther fill a gret vengauce  
 Vpon this tiraunt, quakyng in his dreed, —  
 Al sodenli he fill to grounde ded.

1580

1584 and at last  
 fell dead while  
 in the act of  
 despoiling the  
 temple of  
 Jupiter of  
 Dodona.

1588

¶ *Lenvoye.*

**T**HIS tragedie of Anthiochus,  
 Who list in ordre his froward stori see,  
 First to al vertu he was contrarious,  
 And rebel euer to Roome the cite,  
 Iustli accusid of vicious thynges thre:  
 Of pride, slouthe and of glotonye,  
 And of disordynat superfluite,  
 Of niht excesse, riot and lecherie.

[p. 278] This froward  
 tragedy of  
 Antiochus,  
 who was justly  
 1592 accused of  
 pride, sloth,  
 gluttony, riot  
 and excess,

1596

On hym the Romeyns wer victorious  
 Twies on the lond [and] onis on the se,  
 He was nat hardi, but malicious;  
 In eueri bataile his custum was to flee.  
 Wher vices regnē ther may no grace bee;  
 To al surfetis his lust he dede applie,  
 Noised and disclaundred thoruhout his contre  
 Of niht excesse, riot and lecherie.

1600 and everywhere  
 beaten by the  
 Romans and  
 always forced  
 to flee, shews  
 that where  
 vices reign  
 there is no  
 grace.

1604

Among his lieges wood & despitous,  
 And for a coward knowe in the feld was he;  
 The poore toppresse a wolff most furious,  
 And be deceit a fox for subtilite:  
 No man mor froward, of hih nor louh degre,  
 Nor mor delityng in falsheed nor flatrie.

1608 Cruel to  
 his subjects  
 and a coward,  
 no man was  
 more perverse  
 or fond of  
 falsehood and  
 flattery; and  
 his end was  
 sudden death.

1576. his] that R, om. H, this R 3.

1577. sore] om. H. 1581. Dodovian H, R 3, Dodavian R, Do-  
 doncan P, Dodouyan, B, H 5.

1585. temple] peple H.

1598. *This and the next stanza are transposed in R.*

1605. riot] pride R.

What was his eende? a sodeyn deth, parde, 1612  
For his outrages of pride & lecherie.

Noble Princes,  
remember that  
if you are  
virtuous you  
will prosper.  
Antiochus was  
cast down for  
his pride, riot  
and lechery.

Noble Princis, of prudence ful famous,  
In al your grettest roial mageste,  
Remembreth pleyntli, yif ye be vertuous, 1616  
Ye shal perseuere in long prosperite,  
Wher the contrarie causeth aduersite,  
As this stori afforn doth specefie  
Of Anthiochus, cast from his dignite 1620  
For his gret pride, riot & lecherie.

¶ Explicit.

[How Ieronimus of Ciracuse kyng was slayn, and  
how Scipio Affrican that labored for common  
wele of Romayns was exilid bi them and so  
deied.]<sup>1</sup>

After the death  
of Antiochus,  
came Hieron of  
Syracuse, who  
was innocently  
slain together  
with his three  
dear sisters by  
his hateful  
subjects.

**A**FFTIR the deth of this Antiochus,  
Ther cam a prince to Bochas compleynyng,  
Which that callid was\* Ieronimus, 1624  
Of Siracuse whilom lord & kyng.  
Which of his lieges, he nothyng trespassyng,  
Islay[e]n was with his thre sustren deere  
Of hatrede, myn auctour writ so heere. 1628

The people of  
Syracuse were  
fickle and in  
the habit of  
killing their  
kings on  
occasion, so  
that they  
could have  
a new one.

Siracusany hadde a condicioun,  
Thoruh chaunges newe ay to been vnstable,  
Of wilful malis void of al resoun  
On ther kynges for to be vengable; 1632  
Thei loued nat to han hem perdurable,  
But eueri yeer of custum, this is trewe,  
Them to gouerne to han a prince newe.

And since they  
were forever  
fighting and  
unfruitful in  
their lives, I  
shall pass over  
and speak of  
the Scipios.

And for ther chaunges & ther vnkouth stryues, 1636  
With variaunce of ther condiciouns,  
Because no frut is founde in ther lyues,  
Nor in ther stories nor ther\* successiouns,  
I will passe ouer & speke of Scipiouns, 1640  
And first to write of the worthi man  
Callid in his tyme Scipio Affrican.

1624. was callid B, R, J — Ieromyus H, Ieromynus R 3, Hieronimus P.

1627. thre] om. R. 1639. ther ] in ther B, R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 113 recto.

A famous kniht in al[le] naciouns  
 For his conquest, shortli to concludē,  
 Which hadde brouht ful many regiouns,  
 Mor be wisdam than be multitude,  
 Tobeie the Romeyns; but for ingratitude,  
 Which that he fond in hem, as I reede,  
 How he wrouhte to telle I wil proceede.

1644 Scipio Africanus was a wise and famous knight whom the Romans treated with great ingratitude,

It is remembrið of his worthynesse,  
 Whil that he was flouryng in yong age,  
 How Roome was maad[e] ladi and maistresse  
 Of many a lond[e], to ther auauntage.  
 And specialli al Affrik & Cartage  
 Bi his prowesse, as maad is mencion,  
 Wer brouht of Romeyns vnder subieccioun.

1652 although it was he who brought so many lands under ther subjection.

But thei ageynward wer to hym vnkynde,  
 Bi accusacioun[s] founde out bi ther falsnessis,  
 Saide ageyn hym, as it is put in mynde,  
 Be record of many fals witnessis,  
 That he shold haue besiled the richessis  
 Of Cartage & Affrik the contre,  
 Which appartened to Roome the cite.

1660 They falsely accused him of misappropriating the wealth of Carthage and Africa.

But ageynward this noble Affrican  
 Proudli gaff ansuere to his accusours:  
 He neuer withheeld fro tyme that he began  
 Toward hymself no part of ther tresours,  
 Sauf as the maner is of conquerours,  
 For to conserue his worshep & his name,  
 As most was pröffit to the toun[e]s fame.

1664 But noble Africanus answered them proudly that he never took more than was necessary

This is to meene, pleyntli & nat tarie,  
 He neuer acrochid tresour nih nor ferre  
 Toward hymself, but that was necessarie  
 For ther worshep to meynteene with the werre.  
 And yit that tyme he was ther lodesterre,  
 Tenrece ther boundis, & fulli his delit  
 Was al hool set to the comoun profit.

[p. 279] for the maintenance of the war.  
 1672

1676

1651. yong] om. H.

1652. maistresse] pryncesse H, R 3.

1653. lond] toun & londe H.

1658. accusaciouns] occasiouns H — falsnessis] falsnesse J, P, falsnes R 3.

1660. wytnes R 3. 1661. riches R 3. 1662. &] in R.

1674. the] ther H, R, J, P.



Their malicious  
ingratitude  
drove him into  
voluntary exile.

He took non heed of al the surplusage  
Of ther tresours nor ther gret richesse,  
The name reserued of Affrik & Cartage  
To his knythod and his hih noblesse.  
But ther malicious expert vnkyndenesse  
Was in cause, breeffli to compile,  
His bodi fro them perpetueli textile.

1680

1684.

and resolving  
never again to  
appear in Rome  
he abode in  
a small village.

Cast hym neuer withynne Roome toun  
Aftir that day among hem to be seyn,  
Vnkyndenesse gaff hym occasioun  
Tabente his persone, & of hih disdeyn  
Texile hymselff & neuer come ageyn,  
But for tabide in a smal village  
Callid Lynterne, whan he was falle in age.

1688

He wrote his  
own epitaph,  
saying that  
neither his  
bones nor his  
ashes should  
ever repose  
within the walls  
of Rome.

And for men sholde mynde vpon hym haue  
Bi a maner of indignacioun,  
An epitaphie he sette upon his graue, —  
Which seide thus to them of Roome toun:  
“O peepke vnkynde, vnkynde ageyn resoun,  
My funerall asshes nor my bonis dede  
In thi wallis thou neuer shalt posseede.

1692

1696

“My bones  
shall not rest  
in thy froward  
ground, and the  
remembrance of  
thine ingrati-  
tude shall be  
known far and  
wide by this  
small inscrip-  
tion cut on  
my tomb.

In thyn vnkynde froward teritorie  
My bonys shal nat resten nor abide;  
But thyn vnkyndenesse to putten in memorie,  
The remembraunce shal be rad ful wide  
Of thes lettres graue, on eueri side,  
Be report onli of this smal scripture,  
Which heer is set upon my sepulture.

1700

1704

“That is why  
my funeral was  
held in exile,  
although I did  
so much for  
the community.”

Loo, heer the cause, be brief descripcioun  
Set on my graue for a memoriall,  
Whi that my bonys out of Roome toun  
Been buried heer lowe vnder this wall,  
In exil holde my feeste funerall, —  
Vnkyndenesse me droff from\* that cite,  
That wrouhte so moche for the comounte.”

1708

1712

1684. frome H.

1690. tabide] to dwell H.

1698. shalt] shall H, R 3.

1702. The] To R.

1711. from] out of B, R, J, P, out fro H 5, fro R 3.

[How Scipio Asian lord of Asia pat labored euer for  
the comon wele was mordred.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**FTIR the eende of this Affrican,  
Callid in his tyme worthi Scipioun,  
Cam next his brothir, Scipio Asian,  
Which in Asia hadde domynacioun.  
Geyn whom was made an accusacioun  
To al the senat, that he vntreuli sholde  
Certeyn tresours toward hymself withholde,

Which that he in Asia hadde wonne  
In his conquest be many strong bataille.  
Which accusacioun falsli was begonne  
Of old envie, causeles, this no faile;  
Whos worthynesse ful mekil dede auaille  
To comoun proffit, be thes too conquerours,  
Bi gret richesse encresyng ther tresours.

The ton in Affrik, as ye haue herd me tell,  
Bi his wisdam & his cheualrie,  
The tothir in Asia, which dede excell  
In hih prowessse, as bookes specefie.  
Falsli hyndred of hatreede & envie,  
Bi compassyng of oon Anthiochus,  
Hym to destroe he was so desirous.

Natwithstandyng thes tweyne Scipiouns  
Hadde in ther tyme, be manyfold batailles,  
Brouht into Roome so many regiouns  
Tobeie ther cite, with marcial apparailles,  
And euermor[e] to ther gret auailles  
Brouht in tresours tencrece with ther toun,  
Yit han thei wrouhte to ther destruccioun.

The ton in exil, as maad is mencion,  
Deied, alas, whan that he was old;  
The second was moordred in prisoun:  
Ther bothe stories remembrid heer & told  
To yiuue exaample to princis manyfold,  
That who that laboureth for a comounte  
Leseth ofte his thank, be Scipiouns ye may see.

His brother,  
Scipio Asian,  
was also  
enviously  
accused of  
appropriating to  
himself certain  
treasures

1716

which he had  
won in Asia,  
together  
with many  
lands, for the  
common profit.

1724

And this was  
done by the  
compassing of  
one Antiochus,  
who wished to  
destroy him.

1728

1732

Such was the  
ingratitude with  
which these  
two able men  
were treated.

1736

1740

Scipio Asian  
was murdered  
in prison,  
Africanus died  
in exile; and  
their stories  
are remembered  
here to shew  
princes that  
those who  
labour for the  
community  
receive small  
thanks.

1744

1732. Antiochus H, R, J.

1735, 37, 38. bataille, apparaile, availe H, R 3. 1747. often H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 113 verso.

[How the Duk philopomones was take, put in prisoun,  
affir drank poison and so deied.]<sup>1</sup>

Duke  
Philopœmen,  
who ruled  
Messenia during  
the war between  
Achaea and  
Ætolia,

**A**FFTIR the processe of thes too Scipiouns, 1748  
Atween too peeplis\* wilful & rekles  
Began in Grece newe discenciouns,  
Tween Acheois & Etholois dout[el]les.  
And a gret duk Philopomones, 1752  
A prince that tyme of ful gret puissance,  
Hadde of Messoneys hooli the gouernaunce.

led his own army  
into battle on a  
fair plain,

This said[e] prince Philopomones, [p. 280]  
Leedyng his host upon a ful fair pleyn, 1756  
As he rood armed, & put hymself in pres  
Mid his peeple as gouernour & wardeyn,  
Folk out of reule for to calle ageyn,  
Vpon his steede, as he gan hem fette, 1760  
In deu ordre his wardes for to sette.

and was  
taken captive  
by his enemies  
and put into  
prison where he  
died by drinking  
poison.

And this prince\*, of port most marcial,  
In the pursut which that he gan make,  
Among his enmyes he hadde a sodeyn fall, 1764  
Void of al rescus vnwarli he was take,  
Of al his freendis lik a man forsake,  
Among his enmyes brouht into prisoun,  
Ther maad an eende be drynkyng of poisoun. 1768

He was  
succeeded by a  
captain called  
Lycortas.

Of Philopomones this was the fatal cas,  
Out of gouernaunce, his peeple desolat,  
Except a capteyn callid Ligorias,  
Which in the werris was wonder fortunat, 1772  
Of Acheois took on hym the estat,  
Them to gouerne & the peeple leede,  
Of hym no mor in Bochas I do reede.

[Off the thirde Scipion Nasica that euer wrouht  
moche for the comonte.]<sup>2</sup>

The third  
Scipio, Nasica,  
surpassed all  
other Romans  
in wisdom and  
courage.

**M**YN auctour heer maketh a digressioun, 1776  
And reherseth for a memorial  
Of the thirde worthi Scipioun,  
Callid Nasica, which in especiall

1749. peeple B. 1751. Etholois] Messanians P.

1754. Messoneys] Messonoys H, Achaia P.

1758. myddes H. 1759. for] om. R. 1760. his] a H.

1762. this prince] thes princis B. 1763. he] thei H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 113 verso. <sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 114 recto.

Be disposicioun verray naturall  
Hold among Romeyns, bi report of langage,  
Passyng al othir in wisdam & corage,

1780

Old of discrecioun & but\* yong of yeeris.  
For a myracle, myn auctour doth expresse,  
Whan senatours sente massageris  
Into Frigia bi gret ausynesse  
For Berosynthia, most famous goddesses,  
Whan she was brouht bi them that ded hir guide, 1788  
In hous nor temple she wolde nat abide,

1784

When the  
Senate sent  
messengers to  
Phrygia for  
the goddess  
Berecynthia,

Sauf in the paleis of this Scipioun,  
To putte his name mor in remembraunce.  
The which also, thoruh his hih renoun,  
Gallobois he brouhte to vttraunce,  
A peeple off Grece, ferr out of gouernaunce;  
But Scipioun gan hem so werreie,  
Maugre ther malis the Romeyns for to obeie. 1796

1792

she would not  
abide anywhere  
except in  
Scipio's house,  
which was a  
miracle.

Wherbi his name was put in memorie,  
And ful gret thank in Roome he hath disserued,  
Because onli of this gret victorie,  
For which the tryumphe was to hym reserued.  
But at the laste ful falsli he was serued  
Of the Romeyns aftir ther old maneer,  
In this tragedie anon as ye shal heer.

1800

He also brought  
the Gallobois to  
uttrance, and  
deserved great  
thanks of Rome  
and was given  
a triumph;

Aftir he hadde aumentid ther tresours,  
Conquered in Asie many regiouns,  
Caused of ther faon that thei wer victours,  
Appesid of Graccus the fals occasiouns,  
Compassed of malis be newe discenciouns  
Atween the peeple & also the senat, —  
He of hih wisdam hath stynt al that debat.

1804

but at the last  
he was treated  
with  
ingratitude.

Trustyng the Romeyns, Scipioun was begiled,  
Loste ther fauour, & offendid nouht;  
Be them vnwarli bashed & exiled,  
Cleene forgetyn; put out of ther thouht  
For comoun profit al that he hath wrouht.  
The guerdoun lost, thouh princis canat see,  
Of al that doon for any comounte.

1808

1812

He lost the  
favour of the  
Romans and  
was banished  
and forgotten —  
the usual reward  
of those who  
labour for the  
common weal.

1816

1783. but] nat but B, R, J, P.

1799. this] his R, J, P — gret] om. H, R 3.



Their popularity  
is like a wisp  
of flame or a  
momentary  
glimpse of the  
sun through  
clouds.

Lik a blase for a w[h]ile liht,\*  
Which sheweth [ful] cleer & is neur aftir seyn,  
Or lik a sonne for a moment briht, 1820  
Vnwarli shroudid with a cloude of reyn,  
Riht so the wyndi fauour bloweth in veyn,  
May resemble for a mutabilite,  
Of them that doon for any comounte. 1824

The people are  
as fickle in  
their opinions  
as so many  
Blind Bayards;

The peeple folweth ther owne oppynyouns,  
In ther conceitis thei be so wonderful;  
Will halt the bridil of ther discreciouns:  
Ther hasti deemyng so bestial is & dull, 1828  
On blynde Baiard thei braiden at a pull,  
To quite the guerdouns of marcial bounte  
Of them that doon for any comounte.

the fame of a  
prince is lifted  
to the stars  
to-day and  
obscured to-  
morrow.

This day a prince stant in the peeplis grace, 1832  
Lik as thei wolde his name deifie  
Aboue the sterris in Iubiteris place,  
With Mars & Phebus his name to stellefie;  
But be to-morwe ther komth a sodeyn skie, 1836  
Shewyng ther is a ful feynt surete  
Of them that doon for any comounte.

We need only  
remember the  
fate of the  
three Scipios.

And for tafferme that it is treuli so, [p. 281]  
Calle thre Scipiouns [un]to remembraunce: 1840  
First of Affrik & Asie, bothe too;  
Note in cronicles ther knihtli gouernaunce,  
Ther restles labour Romeyns for tauaunce,  
Rekne ageynward how thes princis thre 1844  
Wer ful vngoodli quit bi the comounte.

### ¶ Lenvoy.

This tragedy  
of these worthy  
notable men,  
who made so  
many regions  
subject to Rome

**T**HIS tragedie of thre Scipiouns,  
[That wer] so worthi in knyththod &\* notable,  
Made so many famous regiouns 1848  
Subiect to Roome (this stori is no fable),  
Wher the Romeyns, double & deceyuable,  
Shewed ageynward to thes princis thre,

1818. liht] briht B, H, R, J. 1819. ful] om. R, J, P.

1820. a] be H.

1832. *This stanza and the next are transposed in H.*

1839. it] is H. 1840. unto] to J, P. 1845. quit] om. H.

1847. &] & eek B.

The thank[e] lost & guerdoun couenable 1852  
Of hym that doth for any comounte.

Rekne up in Affrik the cites & the touns, in both Africa  
Grete Cartage with castellis deffensable; and Asia, with  
Rekne in Asie the gret pocessiouns 1856 vast revenues,

With reuenus verray innumerable;  
Rekne ther tryumphes of pris incomparable,  
Which considred, ye may a merour see,  
How the guerdouns be fals & flaskisable 1860  
Of them that doon for any comounte.

Thei wer whilom the Romeyn champions, and who,  
Off senatours to sette the honour stable, once the  
Tauoid discord & al discenciouns 1864 champions of  
Atween the comouns & statis honourable; were  
But she that is of custum ay chaungable, finally thrown  
Fortune, in whom may be no surete, down from  
Sheweth in hir wheel the guerdouns most mutable 1868 Fortune's wheel,  
Of them that doon for any comounte.

Noble Princis, peiseth in your resouns, shews, Noble  
Al worldli thyng in erthe is transmutable, Princes, that all  
Feynt & vnseur your domynaciouns, 1872 earthly things  
Chartre\* is ther non to make hem perdurable. are unstable,  
Sorwe at departyng your bodies corumpable, even your own  
A thyng rassembleyng that neuer hadde be, domination.  
Record on Scipiouns be guerdouns rassemblable 1876  
Off them that doon for any comounte.

Trusteth neuer in your oppynyouns, Know only that  
But that your poweer is ech day remeuable. your power is  
Beeth nat maad blynd in your discreciouns, 1880 transitory;  
But considreth bexaumples resonable do not allow  
The pley of Fortune lik hasard retournable yourselves to  
With sodeyn chaung of fals felicite, be made blind  
Vnto the guerdouns daili comparable 1884 to the play  
Of them that doon for any comounte. of Fortune.

¶ *Explicit lenvoye.*

1858. ther] be H.

1859. ye] I, H.

1870. peiseth] remembrith H.

1873. Chartre] Charite B, R, H, Cherite J, Chartyr H 5, Chartre  
R 3, P.

[How Duk Hanyball aftir many victorious dedes  
moordred himsilf with poison.] <sup>1</sup>

The famous  
prince Hannibal,  
who hated the  
Romans and  
daunted their  
power, next  
appeared before  
Bochas.

**N**EXT [in ordre] to Bochas, as I reede,  
Out of Affrik & Cartage, *perwithal*  
Ther cam a duk þat hadde most hatrede 1888  
Ageyn the Romeyns in especiall,  
This famous prince callid Hanyball,  
Bi whos prowesse, as it is weel knowe,  
The seid Romeyns wer dauntid & brouht lowe. 1892

Not only did  
his horoscope  
foretell his  
inclinations,

And among othir worthi dukes alle,  
As olde cronicles make menciouñ,  
Of Hanybal the fate is so befallē,  
At his berthe bi disposicioun, 1896  
That of his natural constellacioun  
Set in the heuene, that he sholde bee  
Perpetueli enmy to Roome the cite.

but when a boy  
he swore that he  
would always  
be an enemy  
of Rome.

As the stori of hym doth deuise, 1900  
Whil his fader, duk whilom of Cartage,  
Callid Amulchar dede onys sacrificē  
To his goddis, & he nyne yeer of age,  
Swor & avowed, of herte & of corage, 1904  
Duryng his lyff withoute excepcioun  
Euer to been enmy vnto Roome toun.

He was the  
mighty wall of  
Carthage, who,  
succeeding to  
his father,  
Hasdrubal,

This Martis child, this lusti yonge kniht  
Was to Cartage the strong[e] myhti wall, 1908  
Which succeedid in his fadris riht  
Afttir the deth of worthi Hastruball.  
First he made a werre ful mortall .  
Geyn Saguntynois, as it is specefied, 1912  
Cause with Romeyns that thei wer allied.

dreamt that he  
should conquer  
Spain and  
Italy.

A drem he hadde; & was thus in sentence: [p. 282]  
That he sholde conquere in bataille,  
Maugre al tho that stoden at diffence, 1916  
Too myhti contrees, first Spaigne & than Itaille,  
Doun descendying with gret apparaille,  
Passyng the famous ryueer Iberius,  
And wher he rood alway victorious. 1920

1899. enmy] *om.* H.

1902. Amilchar P. 1904. avowed] *avoied* R.

1910. the] his R. 1912. Saguntines P.

1914. thus] this H, R 3; thys H 5.

1919. hiberus H, R 3, Iberous P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 114 recto.

With hym of Affrik many cheunteyns  
 Rood thoruh Gaule, fond no resistence,  
 Of Pirenes bi the hih mounteyns  
 To shewe the rigour of his magnificence,  
 Ouer the Alpies be sturdi violence,  
 Natwithstondyng the passage was ful wikke,  
 Of slidyng frostis & of snowis thikke.

He first subdued  
 Spain, and,  
 crossing the  
 Pyrenees, rode  
 through Gaul  
 and down over  
 the Alps into  
 Italy,

A gret[e] parti of his men he\* loste  
 Bi the constreynt of that fell passage,  
 Hors, olefauntis, that many besaunt coste,  
 Fond gret daunger off them in his cariage.  
 Assault of brigauntis, whan thei fond anauntage; 1932  
 And as Bochas put in remembraunce,  
 Felte gret losse of al his ordenaunce.

1928 losing many of  
 his men and  
 horses and  
 elephants in  
 the passage.

The Alpies passid with trauaile & gret wo,  
 This Hanybal with al his cheualrie  
 Approched is the ryueer off the Poo,  
 Cam to a toun that callid is Cursie,  
 Which stant upon the cite of Pauye,  
 Wher a consul named\* Scipioun  
 Gaff hym bataille euene affor the toun.

Approaching  
 the River Po,  
 he defeated  
 Gneus Scipio at  
 Pavia,

The same consul, Gneus Scipioun,  
 Which bi prowess\* of manli Hanyball  
 Was disconfited, as maad is mencioun,  
 Tofor Pauye hadde a riht foul[e] fall:  
 The first victorie in especiall  
 That he hadde beyounde the mounteyns,  
 Whan he purposed\* tassaile the Romeyns.

1940

1944

1948

Sempronyus, a-nother consuleer,  
 That was felawe to said[e] Scipioun,  
 Sent eek fro Roome with a ful proud cheer  
 Geyn Hanyball; but in his comyng doun  
 Tofor Tresbie, a large myhti toun,  
 Outraied was bi fatal auenture  
 And aftir neuer myhte his fall recure.

as well as  
 Sempronius,  
 who had been  
 sent from Rome  
 against him.

1952

1922. Rood] And R.

1928. men he] peeple B, R, J, P. 1931. Fond] And R.

1938. toun] hil P — Cursie] Curye H, Curye R 3, Currye H 5,  
 Ticine P.

1939. upon] nighe P. 1940. named] callid B, J, R, P.

1943. prowess] processe B, R, J. 1945. foule] full R.

1948. purposed] pursued B, R, J. 1950. the seyde R.

1951. fro] to R.



Off too consuleris this was the wooful fyn, 1956  
 Sempronyus & Gneus Scipioun.  
 Ouer the mounteyn callid Appenyn  
 Wente Hanybal, thoruh his hih renoun,  
 To gret damage & gret confusioun 1960  
 Of his peeple that passid the mounteyns,  
 Destroied with cold, gret snowh & hidous reyns.

He then crossed  
 the Apennines,  
 where many of  
 his men died  
 of accident and  
 exposure. He  
 himself escaped  
 on an elephant,  
 but lost one of  
 his eyes.

Loste his knihtis, his tresours & his goodis,  
 Ther myht as tho be maad[e] no diffence; 1964  
 His grete steedes drowned in the floodes  
 Bi the watris myhti violence,  
 Fond for the tyme no bettir resistance,  
 Sauf he eskaped fro that sodeyn wrak, 1968  
 Of an olyfaunt, he ridyng on the bak.

Afterwards he  
 defeated and  
 slew Flaminius.

So importable was his greuouse peyne,  
 Onli born up of marcial corage,  
 Yit ther he lost oon of his eyen tweyne, 1972  
 Kept of kniithod o cheer & o visage.  
 Thoruh Itaille heeld alwey his passage,  
 Slouh a consul callid Flamynyus;  
 Thus in thre batailles he was victorious. 1976

Finally  
 Quintus Fabius,  
 seeing that no  
 Roman captain  
 could conquer  
 him, invented  
 a new method  
 of fighting by  
 ambush and  
 constant  
 harassing,

But in this while, as seith myn auctour,  
 Quyntus Fabius, subtil & deceyuable,  
 Which was in Roome a famous dictatour,  
 And he apparceyued\* be toknes ful notable, 1980  
 No Romeyn capteyn was in tho daies ale,  
 As it was shewed be experience,  
 Geyn Hanybal to make resistance.°

Yit in his conceit he subtili gan serche; 1984  
 To fynde a weie he dede his besi peyne,  
 Day be day gan felli theron werche,  
 Outher be fraude or sum compassid treyne  
 To ligge await & secreli ordeyne 1988  
 Enbushmentis to his auantages,  
 Of Hanybal to stoppe the passages.

1959. hih] gret R. 1961. passid] om. R.

1972. lost he H.

1980. And he] Which H, R 3, H 5, P — apparceyued] apper-  
 teyned B.

1984. Yit] But H — his] this R.

1985. he] om. H.

But al his treynys seruid hym of nouht;  
 For Hanybal, this worthi Affrican,  
 In his conquest so prudentli hath wrouht,  
 So lik a prince & a knihtli man,  
 Fro thilke tyme that he werris gan  
 Ageyn the Romeyns, bothe on se & lond,  
 That thei wer feeble his poweer to withstond.

1992 yet even he  
 could accom-  
 plish little; and  
 the Romans  
 became less  
 and less  
 able to  
 withstand  
 Hannibal's  
 power.

This Quintus Fabius kept hym alway cloos, [p. 283]  
 Liggyng await to falle on Hanyball;  
 And of assent eek to his purpos  
 Ther was oon Varo, manli & wis withal.  
 And so thes tweyne in especial,  
 Withynne Poile, a large gret contre,  
 Fauht with Hanybal at Kannes the cite.

1996  
 2000 Quintus Fabius,  
 however, con-  
 tinued his  
 campaign,  
 assisted by  
 Varro;

As the stori maketh rehersaile,  
 The Romeyn parti, of worthi werreious  
 Wer fourti thousand slay[e]n in bataille:  
 Emylius Paulus, thretti senatours,  
 Twenti in noubre that hadde be pretours,  
 And thre hundred capteyns of estat,  
 Slayn be Hanybal in that mortal debat.

2004  
 and they  
 fought  
 Hannibal at  
 Cannæ

And bi the slauhtre of Emilius,  
 The noble consul, Romeyns disespeired.  
 And Hanybal, that day victorious,  
 To his loggyng is ageyn repeired,  
 His foon outraied & mortalli appeired,  
 Knew no refut ageyn this manli kniht,  
 But at myscheeff took hem to the fliht.

2012 and were again  
 defeated.

The which[e] day, yiff that Hanybal  
 Hadde hem folwed proudli to the toun,  
 Bi the counseil of oon Marthabal,  
 A manli kniht, a prince of hih renoun,  
 He sholde haue had ful pocessioun  
 That day of Roome, lik to his entente, —  
 But I suppose Fortune list nat assente.

2020 But Hannibal  
 failed to press  
 home his  
 victory and lost  
 his chance of  
 entering Rome.

In this processe, pleynli, as I reede,  
 This Hanybal wex proud & riht pompous,  
 Of foure victories dempte hymself in deede

2024  
 He grew proud  
 and indolent,

1991. his] thes R.

1997. feblee R — poweer] prowess H, R 3, H 5.

2004. Cannas R, J, P, Cannes H 5, Cannes H, Kannes R 3.

2011. be] with R. 2013. disepeired R.

2019. day] hanyball R. 2021. Mataball H. 2027. &] om. R.

- About al othir to be most glorious,  
 Of his corage most inli surquedous.  
 But, o alas, a litil slouthe & pride,  
 For lak of pursut, his conquest set aside. 2032
- although during the course of the war he had slain so many Romans that three bushels filled with their gold rings were sent home to Carthage.  
 Yit in his conquest, of knihtis that lay ded,  
 Of consuleris old & yong of age,  
 With senatours, the processe who list reed, 2036  
 Slayn in the feeld[e] in that mortal rage,  
 Duk Hanybal sente to Cartage,  
 Of cleene gold, be record of writyngis,  
 Out of the feeld thre busschel ful of ryngis.
- Fortune now became unfavourable.  
 Aftir foure victories heer remembrid,  
 Bi and bi the processe, who list see,  
 In which[e] many worthi was dismembrid,  
 Bothe of Affrik & Roome the cite, 2040  
 Abate gan the gret prosperite 2044  
 Of Hanybal be froward auenture:  
 Set onys bak, hard fortune to recure.
- Wintering at Capua in great luxury,  
 Aftir the flouris of his felicite,  
 His noblesse drouh to declynacioun. 2048  
 To Capue he wente, a myhti strong cite,  
 Ther to soiourne, as maad is mencioune,  
 Al the tyme of wyntres cold sesoun,  
 Wher to his lust & bodili plesaunce, 2052  
 Off al vitaille fond gret habundaunce.
- his soldiers lost much of their martial power through over-indulgence;  
 Which made his knihtis slouh vnto the werre;  
 For wyn, wommen and plente of vitaille  
 Ful offte sithe cause men to erre, 2056  
 Make hem feeble ther ennyes to assaille: \*  
 Gorges agroteied, enboced ther entraille,  
 Disposeth men rather to reste & slepe,  
 Than of ther ennyes for to taken keepe. 2060
- and in the spring, when Hannibal purposed to lay siege to Rome, he was hindered by the rains,  
 But whan wyntir with his frostis colde  
 Was ouergon in thilke regioun,  
 Hanybal gan his purpos holde,  
 To leyn a siege vnto Roome toun. 2064  
 But so gret reynys fill from heuen doun,  
 So gret[e] tempest vpon eueri side,  
 For the constreynt he myht[e] nat abide.

2031. o] om. H. 2036. in] on H.

2047. his] hir H. 2049. Capua P.

2057. to assaille] tassaille B, for tassaille H, R 3, H 5.

2058. Egroteied H, engrosed R 3. 2066. vpon] om. R.

To fortifie, the said[e] Hanybal,  
Ageyn his enmyes wher he hadde a-doo,  
Sente lettres vnto Hastrubal,  
In riht gret haste for to come hym too.  
But Fortune hir wheel hath turnid so,  
That Hastrubal, wher he was loth or fayn,  
Be Salynator venquissed was & slayn.

2068 and failed of  
his reinforce-  
ments, owing  
to the defeat  
and death of  
Hasdrubal.

2072

Of which[e] myscheeff & disconfiture  
Hanybal gan dulle in his corage,  
Compleyned sore of this mysauenture,  
Knew no refut ageyn this mortal rage,  
Herd eek seyn that Affrik & Cartage  
Were of newe, to his confusioun,  
Strongli werreyed be worthi Scipioun.

2076 This, together  
with the news  
that Scipio was  
attacking  
Carthage and  
had taken  
Syphax  
prisoner,  
dulled his  
courage.

2080

Siphax also of Numedie kyng,  
Which ageyn Romeyns gan a werre make,  
Maugre his myht & al his fel werkyng  
Was bi force of Scipioun Itake,  
Wherthoruh his corage gretli gan a-slake.  
And how Cartage, cheeff of that regeoun,  
Beseged was also be Scipioun.

[p. 284]

2084

Thus Hanybal constreyned was of neede  
Hom to repeire for rescus off Cartage,  
And was also, in bookis as I reede,  
The same tyme falle ferré in age,  
And at myscheeff & gret disauantage  
Ageyn Scipioun ful lite[l] myht auaille,  
Bi whom he was sconfited in bataille.

2088

Compelled to  
return home  
to rescue his  
city, and grown  
old, he was  
beaten by  
2092 Scipio;

Cartage constreynid of necessite,  
Them to submitte vnto Roome toun;  
And for ther mor hard aduersite,  
Gneus Seruilius was fro Rome sent doun,  
Onli of purpos for this conclusioun:  
For to procure in especiall  
Fynal destruccioun & deth off Hanyball.

2096 and after  
Carthage had  
surrendered,

2100

Afftir al his marcial labours,  
His old felicite wex froward & vnmeete,  
In holuh images put al his tresours,

2104 he hid his  
wealth in hollow  
images and  
went to Crete,

2088. be] of H. 2095. scomfited H.

2099. Gneus] Cayus P — Seruilius] Geruilius R — fro rome was

H. R 3, H 5.

2103. And aftir R.

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Took his passage into the lond of Creete,  
 Found\* Fortune contrarie & vnsueete,  
 Made officeris keepyn his richesse 2108  
 In the temple of Diane the goddesse.

and afterwards  
 to Prusias,  
 king of  
 Bithynia, who,  
 threatened by  
 the Romans,

Sumwhat for trust & parcer<sup>e</sup>ek for dreede,  
 To fynde socour he wente [un]to the kyng  
 Of Bithynye to helpe hym in his neede, 2112  
 Callid Prusias; but of his komyng  
 The slehti Romeyns hadde knowlechyng:  
 To Bithynye doun ther lettres sente,  
 "Yif Hanybal scape, eckon ye shal repente." 2116

laid siege to the  
 fortress in which  
 Hannibal had  
 taken refuge.

The lettres radde, the kyng the same day  
 Made his peeple besege the dongoun  
 Wher duk Hanybal of truste allone lay.  
 Al destitut whan he knew this tresoun, 2120  
 Tescape his enmyes drank wilfulli poisoun,  
 Ches rather so, sith othir escap was noon,  
 Than in the handis to fallyn of his foon.

Hannibal, seeing  
 that his position  
 was hopeless,  
 drank poison,  
 praying the  
 gods to take  
 vengeance on  
 Prusias.

To for his deth[e] aide this orisoun,  
 To alle the goddis seuoutli doun knelyng,  
 That thei wolde of this fals tresoun  
 Take vengeance on Prusias the kyng,  
 Which was cause, bi his fals werkyng, 2128  
 Of [the] destruccioun and the deth fynall  
 Of this riht famous worthi Hanyball.

### [Lenvoy.]

My pen quaked  
 and my heart  
 bled when I  
 wrote this  
 tragedy of  
 Hannibal.

**T**HIS tragedie froward to write or reede  
 Of this forseid manli Hanyball, 2132  
 My penne quook, myn herte I felte bleede,  
 For to beholde the woful pitous fall  
 Of hym that was the diffensable wall  
 Of Cartage, the stronge myhti toun, 2136  
 Which slouh hymself be drynkyng of poisoun.

2107. Found] And B, R, J, P.

2111. unto] to R, J, P. 2112. his] this H, R 3.

2116. ye] thai H.

2117. The] Thes H.

2120. this] his R.

2129. 1st the] om. H, R, R 3, H 5 — 2nd the] om. J, P.

2130. hastruball H.

It was to hym, he thouhte, mor manheede  
 To slen hymselff be vengauce most mortall,  
 Than his enmyes be constreynt sholde hym leede 2140  
 In cheynys bounde, he to be [ther] thrall.  
 So gret despiht he hadde of hem at all,  
 That leuer he hadde, than bide in ther prisoun,  
 To moordre hymself be drynkyng off poisoun. 2144

who thought it  
 more manly  
 to slay himself  
 than to be  
 thrall to his  
 enemies.

As me seemeth, in this horrible deede  
 He rassembled the furies infernal;  
 Of cruel Pluto I trowe he took his meede,  
 Voide off resoun, [he] becam bestiall.  
 At whos terrible fes > funerall,  
 Goddesse Proserpyna cam with manes doun,  
 The same tyme whan he drank poisoun.

It seems to me  
 that he was like  
 one of the  
 Furies of the  
 lower regions.  
 He received his  
 reward of Pluto.

Noble Princis, considreth & take\* heede,  
 Leuyng the surplus hys deedis marciall,  
 Knihtli remembreth, & hath in herte hatreede  
 Of his empoisonnyng in especiall,  
 Abhomyable to God & man withal,  
 That a prince so famous of renoun  
 Sholde moordre hymself be drynkyng of poisoun. 2152

Noble Princes,  
 remember that  
 a self-inflicted  
 death by poison  
 is abominable to  
 God and man.

[How Prusias kyng of Bethenye betraied Hanybal  
 and wolde haue disherite his sone & heir went a  
 beggyng in straunge landys.]<sup>1</sup>

**F**OLWYNG in ordre ther cam to Bochas  
 Of Bithynye the grete myht[y] kyng,  
 Which in his tyme was callid Prusias,  
 Gretli slaundred & noised of o thyng,  
 That he was fals & double in werkyng,  
 Ageyn the noblesse of his estat roiall,  
 Because that he betraished Hanyball.

Next followed  
 Prusias, king  
 of Bithynia,  
 who betrayed  
 Hannibal

This defeaute dirked the brihtnesse  
 Of his fame & his knihtli renoun,  
 And eclipsed his passid old prowesse  
 Bi report in many a regeoun.  
 Alas, that euer the condicioun  
 Of doubilnesse bi falsnesse or feynnyng,  
 Sholde be founde, a[nd] namli in a kyng!

[p. 285] and thereby  
 darkened  
 the brightness  
 of his fame.

Alas that  
 treachery  
 should ever be  
 found in a  
 king!

2141. their] *om.* R. 2148. he] *om.* R, J.  
 2150. be goddesse H. 2152. take] taketh B, J.  
 2155. enpoisonnyng H.  
 2162. slaundred] disclaundrid H, dyslandryd H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 116 recto.

This Prusias  
had a son  
called  
Nicomedes,  
whom he  
purposed to  
deprive of his  
heritage

Off this Prusias fether to proceede,  
Which geyn Hanybal wrouhte this tresoun,  
A sone he hadde callid Nichomeede,  
Born to\* been heir be iust successioun. 2176  
But his fader bi fals collusioun  
Purposed hym, for he was yong of age,  
To putte hym out of his heritage.

because he had a  
younger son by  
a second wife.

In this mateer ther greuh up a gret striff 2180  
Bi Prusias [a]geyn this Nichomeede,  
Cause that he bi his seconde wiff  
Hadde a yong sone, in bookis thus I reede,  
Whom he purposeth to preferre in deede, 2184  
For which he caste, bi short conclusioun,  
Off Nichomeede the destruccioun.

And for tacomplisshe this froward fals mateer,  
Bi ful gret deliberacioun 2188  
Kyng Prusias gan shewen heuy cheer  
Geyn Nichomeede, seekyng occasioun  
To depryue hym off pocessioun,  
Afftir his\* day, bi sotil fals werkyng, 2192  
In Bithynye he shal nat regne as kyng.

The people saw  
what he was  
about and stood  
by Nicomedes,

The peeple seyng this gret inquite  
Wrouht bi the kyng geyn good[e] conscience,  
Thoruh al the lond, of hih & lough degre, 2196  
To Nichomeede, alle of o sentence,  
Gaff ther good will and ther benivolence,  
For eueri lord and eueri gret baroun  
Stood hool with hym thoruh al the regioun. 2200

who was  
crowned king  
by just title;  
and Prusias had  
to beg for his  
living in foreign  
lands. Such is  
the end of  
treason and  
deceit.

Thus bi iust title he was crowned kyng.  
Prusias for shame & heuynesse  
In straunge contrees lyued be beggyng,  
Al desolat cried for almesse. 2204  
Loo, heer the eende of tresoun & falsnesse! —  
Laft\* at myscheeff, myn auctour seith the same,  
Of pouerte forsook his owne name.

Prusias suffered  
both for his  
injustice to  
Nicomedes and  
his treachery to  
Hannibal.

Seeth heer too thynges, & taketh riht good heede, 2208  
Of Prusias thunwar sodeyn myschaunce,  
The disherityng doon to Nychomeede,

2176. to] be B. 2181. geyn J, R, H, R 3, H 5.  
2187. for] om. H, R 3, P. 2192. his] this B, R, P.  
2194. gret] om. H. 2199. 1st eueri] euer R.  
2200. the] pat R. 2206. Laft] Last B. 2209. chaunce H.

Aftir folwyng on hym the grete vengauce,  
 As the stori put in remembrance, 2212  
 For tresoun doon odible & mortal  
 Ageyn the forseid famous Hanybal.

[Ho[w] Persa of Macedoyne kyng that enpoisoned  
 his\* brothir/ was bi Emylyus outraied & deied  
 in prisoun.]<sup>1</sup>

**B**ESPREYNT with teris, pitousli weping,  
 As Bochas sat in his studie allone,  
 Next cam Persa, of Macedoyne kyng,  
 And mortalli he gan sihhe & grone  
 And furiousli for to make his mone,  
 That he whilom was of so hih renoun,  
 Constreyned afftir to deien in prisoun.

2216 Persa, king of  
 Macedonia,  
 appeared  
 sighing and  
 groaning  
 before Bochas,  
 for, in spite  
 of his great  
 renown, he died  
 in prison.

This said[e] Persa of nature was froward,  
 Euel disposed eek of condicioun.  
 Thouh he of berthe was but a bastard,  
 He compassid bi fals collusioun  
 Afftir his fader to haue pocessioun,  
 As myn auctour remembreth be writyng,  
 Of Macedoyne to be crowned kyng.

2224 He was evil-  
 disposed and a  
 bastard, and in  
 order to be-  
 come king

His fader Phelipp, the stori tellith thus,  
 Hadde a sone which was yong of age,  
 Wis & redi, callid Demetrius,  
 Born & begete treuli in mariage.  
 But Persa caste bi furious outrage  
 Hym to destroië & moordre be poisoun,  
 He of that kyngdam to haue pocessioun,—

2228 procured the  
 death of his  
 young brother  
 Demetrius, the  
 rightful heir,

Falsli compassed\* to his auantage,  
 In his entent Demetrius to depriue  
 Of Macedoyne, which was his heritage.  
 And therupon he lettres gan contryue  
 To preeue hym tre[i]tour whil he was alyue.  
 Wherof kyng Phelipp gretli was annoyed,  
 That he & Persa sholde be destroied

2236 by telling Philip,  
 his father, that  
 he was a  
 traitor.

2217. Persa] Persius P.

2219. foriously R. 2220. hih] gret R.

2222. Persius P. 2224. he of berthe] of birth he H.

2236. compassed] compasseth B.

2237. his] this H. 2240. on live H.

2241. annoyed] Enoid H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 116 recto; his is repeated.



- Philip then  
caused  
Demetrius to be  
slain by poison. Be Demetrius, that thouhte no damage,  
Mente non harm in his oppynyoun; 2244  
Yit his fader, suspecious of corage,  
As\* Persa gaff hym fals enformacioun,  
Made hym be slayn be drynkyng of poisoun  
Vpon a day, a thyng abhomynable, 2248  
Sittyng at mete at his fadris table.
- Afterwards when  
he knew the  
truth he died  
of grief, and  
Persa usurped  
the crown, Kyng Phelipp aftir, whan he knew the trouthe, [p.286]  
Hadde of his deth[e] gret compassioun,  
But al to late; & that was ful gret routhe. 2252  
Which caused aftir his owne destruccioun, —  
For sorwe deide; and of presumpcioun,  
Persa afftir, falsli vsurpyng,  
In Macedoyne was c[o]rownid kyng. 2256
- and, allyng  
himself with  
Greece and  
Thrace, began  
a war against  
Rome. With dyuers contrees made his alliaunce,  
In Grece, &\* Trace gat freendes nih & ferre,  
And of pride & wilful gouernaunce  
Caste with Romeyns for to holde werre. 2260  
Vngrade & youthe made hym for to erre,  
Til a consul sente fro Roome toun  
Brouhte this Persa to destruccioun.
- Æmilius was  
sent against  
him, and  
before the  
battle, seeing  
his daughter  
weep, Callid Emilius was this consuleur, 2264  
Sent ageyn Persa to haue a gret bataille.  
Seyng his douhtir heuy of hir cheer,  
Whan he wente oute his enmyes to assaille,  
Made vnto hire this vnkouth apposaille: 2268  
“Whi weepe ye so? What thyng doth you greeue,  
At my departyng takyng of me leue?”
- discovered  
that it was  
for her whelp  
called Persa,  
which had just  
died; and this  
her father felt  
sure was a  
good omen. “Fader,” quod she, “& ye taken heed,  
A whelp I hadde that dede me gret plesaunce, 2272  
Callid Persa, the which riht now is ded,  
And this cheef cause onli of my greuaunce.”  
Hir fader thanne gan chaungen contenaunce:  
“This a tokne, to myn encres of glorie, 2276  
That I of Persa shal hauen the victorie.”

2246. As] And B, R, J, P — Persius P.  
2256. corownid] crownid H, R, J, R 3, P, corownyd H 5.  
2258. &] in B, R, J, R 3, H 5 — frendis gat H.  
2262. fro] to R.  
2266. heuy] om. H. 2268. opposaille H.  
2272. me] om. R, J.  
2273. Persius P. 2274. this] thes R.

In Macedoyne he & Persa mette,  
 And quit hym ther lik a manli kniht,  
 Conquereth the lond, non myht[e] hym *witbsette*, 2280  
 And manli putte Persa to the fliht;  
 Afftir to Trace he took the weie riht.  
 Of which[e] conquest short processe to make,  
 With his too sonys Persa was ther take.

Æmilius put  
 Persa to flight  
 and took him  
 prisoner

2284

Emelius aftir this victorie  
 Axeth the tryumphe vnto his guerdoun;  
 And as it is remembred in historie,  
 Persa folweth his\* char thoruh Rome toun,  
 Condemned aftir to deien in prisoun.  
 The which[e] deth he dede weel disserue,  
 For he be poisoun made his brother sterue.

and received the  
 triumph.  
 Persa after-  
 wards died in  
 prison and  
 richly deserved  
 his fate, because  
 he had poisoned  
 his brother.

2288

Thus can Fortune, erli & eek late,  
 Doun from hir wheel & hir hih[e] stage  
 Of proude princis the surquedie abate.  
 Whan to hir lust she seeth most auauantage,  
 She frowardli can turnen hir visage,  
 And sodenli thestat of hem consume,  
 Aboue ther offis that wrongli list presume.

2292 Fortune is  
 always able  
 to curb the  
 pride of princes  
 when they  
 presume above  
 their office,

2296

¶ Amongis which, a kyng of Israel,  
 Ageyn the presept and lawe of Moises,  
 Callid Ozias, the Bible kan weel tel,  
 Of presumpcioun wilful & rek[e]lles,  
 To sacrefise put hymself in pres,  
 Lik a bisshop in the temple arraied;  
 But or he passid he gretli was affraied,

as did Azariah,  
 who went into  
 the temple  
 dressed as a  
 bishop and  
 demanded to be  
 allowed to make  
 sacrifice,

2300

2304

Lost his speche, [and] smet with meselrie  
 Duryng his lyff: loo, heer a gret vengauunce! —  
 Off his crowne & his regalie  
 Inpotent to vse the gouernaunce,  
 Parcel for pride & disobeissaunce;  
 For he list nat meekli the lawe obeie,  
 For which at myscheef he dede a lepre deie.

for which he  
 lost his spech  
 and died a leper.

2308

2312

2278. Persius P.

2288. his] aftir his B, R.

2292. can] cam R.

2295. lust] lyst R.

2299. Isrell H.

2306. and] om. R, J, P, R 3, H 5.

2309. Inpotent H.

[How Amonyus a prince of Antioche delityng in  
pillage and robbery, with other vicious lyuyng,  
fledde in womannes wede aftir taken and slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

Ammonius, a  
great warrior,  
prince of  
Antioch, robbed  
the rich and  
spoiled the poor,

**N**EXT in ordre, compleynyng his distresse,  
Cam Amonyus, a notable werreieur,  
To Iohn Bochas to shewe his heuynesse,  
In Antioche prince & gouvernour.

2316

Of which contre whil he was pocessour,  
Hadde in custum, & this was his trauaile,  
To robbe the riche & spoille the poraile.

and spared  
neither young  
nor old. As he  
cared for  
nothing but  
women and  
drink,

Spared nouthur old nor yong off age,  
Took fro marchaunter tresour & richesse,  
And in delites\* of lecherous outrage\*  
Was al his lust, with wach & dronkenesse.  
Will in his court of resoun was maistresse,  
Causyng the peeple thoruh al the regioun  
To rise ageyn hym bi rebellioun.

2320

2324

his subjects  
rose against  
him, and he  
fled dressed  
as a woman,  
and when  
caught swore  
that he was  
one.

Contrarie he was to al good disciplyne;  
The peeple aros ageyn hym on a day,  
And he for feer, in habite femynyne,  
Lik a wrechch fledde cowardli away.  
Take at myscheeff, was made no delay,  
Falsli confessed\*, heeryng many a man,  
Ageyn nature that he was a woman.

2328

2332

But the  
people found  
out the truth,  
and killed him.  
Fortune well  
knows how to  
punish those  
who will not  
follow virtue;

Thé trouthe knowe and the sclaudre riff, [p. 287]  
Alle of assent the peeple Antiocheene  
Ros attonys; and so he loste his lyff,  
Thei wer so woode ageyn hym in ther teene.  
Thus of Fortune the chaunge is alwey seene,  
Fro bet to wers she can so weel transmue  
Thestat of them that wil no vertu sue.

2336

2340

[How Andrisus of lowe birth born hauyng no title  
of Macedoyne kyng was taken and deied in  
prisoun.]<sup>2</sup>

but she is to  
blame when  
she sets an  
unknown boy  
on a throne by  
error, as  
happened to  
Andrisus,

**B**VT of o thyng Fortune is to blame,  
That she is so chaungable of corage,  
To sette a boy, vnknowe of birthe & fame,  
Bi fals errorr upon a roial stage:

2344

2314. Anonyus R. 2320. age] ages R, J.

2322. delices B, J — outrage] outrages B, J, R.

2332. confessed] confessyng B, R, J, P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 116 verso.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 117 recto.

For oon Andriscus bi surquedous outrage,  
 Withoute title, be subtil compassyng,  
 Of Macedoyne took on hym to be kyng.

Colour was non his cleym to make stable,  
 Except that he of cheer & off visage  
 Was to kyng Phelipp of fetures most semblable,  
 Wherbi the peep<sup>le</sup> in ther furious rage  
 Cauhte oppynyoun, of wilful fals dotage,  
 Ageyn resoun, [as] Bochas doth descryue,  
 That kyng Phelipp was rise fro deth to lyue,

2348 who had no  
 other claim  
 to Macedon  
 than that he  
 looked like  
 King Philip,  
 Persa's father.

2352

Whilom fadir to Persa, as I tolde.  
 And for Andriscus, brouht up in wrechchidnesse,  
 In presence both of yong & old  
 Was bold to cleyme be title of rihtwisnesse,  
 Shewyng no ground but personel liknesse,  
 Mokkyng the peep<sup>le</sup>, which bi ther fauour  
 Of roial dignite resceyueth the honour.

2356 The people  
 thought that  
 Philip had  
 risen from the  
 dead; and as  
 Andriscus was  
 egged on by  
 others, he took  
 possession of  
 the throne.

2360

Thus he that was fostred as a wrech  
 In miserie and eek in pouerte,  
 Fro poore bed his hornis dede up strechche  
 To holde a sceptre of kyngli dignite.  
 And bi the support of the comounite  
 He gan wexe pompous and elat, —  
 Brouht up of nouht, whan he stood in estat.

2364 Afterwards, as  
 was to be  
 expected, he  
 became puffed  
 up with pride;

2368

Nothyng mor cruel, nor nothyng more vengable,  
 Nor mor hasti to execucioun,\*  
 Nor mor deynous, nor mor vntretable,  
 Than whan a beggere hath domynacioun:  
 A curre mor froward than a strong leoun.  
 And semblabli, non so gret cruelte  
 As whan a wrech is set in dignite.

2372 for nothing is  
 more cruel and  
 supercilious  
 than a wretch  
 set in dignity.  
 A cur is more  
 impudent than  
 a lion.

This Andriscus in his roial chaieer,  
 Texecute his hatful cruelte  
 Gadred peep<sup>le</sup> in contres ferr & neer  
 In Macedoyne; & of old enmyte  
 Began maligne geyn Roome the cite.  
 But to withsette his froward fals entent,  
 Oon Iuencius, a pretour, was doun sent.

2376 He began  
 to malign  
 against Rome.

2380

2353. as] *om.* R.

2354. rise] *rysen* R. 2355. to] of R. 2358. be] his H.

2370. execucioun] doo execucioun B, do execucioun R, J, P.

2378. peeplis H. 2380. ageyn H. 2381. fals] *om.* R.

2382. Iuuentus P.



Juventius, a  
praetor, was  
sent against  
him and  
defeated,  
because of his  
vainglory.

But because that he was negligent,  
And of despiht[e] took of hym non heede, 2384  
He was outraied, & bi Andriscus shent,  
With al the peeples that he dede leede.  
But the Romeyns, of hope bet to speede,  
Han sent Metellus, a ful manli kniht, 2388  
To Macedoyne to meete [hym] anon riht.

Metellus then  
set on him  
and took him  
prisoner to  
Rome.

This worthi man list nat longe tarie,  
Set proudli on in hope it sholde auaille,  
Made Macedoyne to Roome tributarie, 2392  
Took Andriscus manli in bataille,  
Brouht hym to Roome *with* myhti apparaille,  
And made hym lyn fetrid in prisoun  
For his outraious fals presumpcioun. 2396

Thus he was  
chastised for  
being proud and  
disdainful in  
his prosperity.

Thus for his froward vsurpacioun,  
That he was hawteyn in his prosperite,  
Knew nat hymself thoruh fals abusioun,  
Blent with a myst of blynd felicite, 2400  
List nat remembre of his first pouerte,  
Whom to chastise Fortune brouht[e] lowe,\*  
Because he list nat hymselfen for to knowe.

[How Alisaundre ballas kyng of Surre for extor-  
cioun pride and vnkyndenesse deied atte mis-  
cheef.]<sup>1</sup>

There was once  
a kyng of  
Syria called  
Alexander  
Balas.

THUS kan this ladi pleyen hir paient 2404  
Bi a maner of deynous mokerie,  
Hir entermes forth serue hem of entent,  
To folk that truste hir onli of folie. .  
And to purpos, — whilom of Surrie 2408  
Ther was a kyng, lik as writ Bochas,  
Callid Alisaundre, whos surname was Ballas.

After Antiochus  
Eupator was  
set aside

Of which Ballas to telle the processe,  
First of his risyng & aftir of his fall: 2412  
Anthiochus, the stori berth witnesse,

2389. hym] *om.* R, P.

2396. fals] *fell* H. 2398. his] *hih* H.

2399. fals] *his fals* H. 2402. lowe] *hym lowe* B.

2404. pleyn R.

2408. of] *in H, R 3, H 5 — Surrie*] *sutrie* R. 2409. as] *a* H.

2410. was] *is* H. — whos surname was Ballas] but truly Prom-  
palas P.

2411. Ballas] *Prompalus* P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 117 recto.

Callid Eupater, which in especial  
Cleymed title to thestat roiall,  
Afftir his fader named Anthiochus  
Epiphanes, the stori tellith thus.

2416

Afftir whos deth the kyngdam of Surrye  
Sholde longe be successioun

[p. 288] by Demetrius, a  
brother of  
Epiphanes,

To Eupater; & eek for his partie  
Demetrius, hostage in Roome toun,

2420

Cleymed a title to\* that regeoun  
Of Surrye, because Epiphanes  
Was brothir\* to hym, this stori is no les.

2424

Demetrius fro Roome is come doun  
Into Surrye to cleyme his heritage,  
Resceyueth the crowne [&] took pocessioun,  
Gan wexe proud, presumptuous of corage.  
Thus Eupater, that was but yong of age,  
Excludid was in Surrie to succeede.  
Of Demetrius ferther thus I reede:

Demetrius grew  
proud and  
presumptuous

2428

Outraious he was aboue mesure,  
Riht vengable & ful of cruelte,  
Hatful also to eueri creature,  
And heuy born of worthi kynges thre;  
First in Egipt of worthi Tholome,  
And off Attilius in Asie tho regnyng,  
And Arirarches in Capadoce kyng,—

2432 and behaved so  
outrageously  
that all men  
hated him.

2436

Alle of assent ageyn hym han conspired,  
Fond a weie Demetrius to depryue,  
His vndoing so sore thei ha[ue] desired.  
And ther entent texecute blyue,  
Thei gan a fable of purpos to contryue,  
As ye shal heere, togidre as thei wente,  
To which al Surrye attonys dede assente.

2440 Ptolemy,  
Attalus  
and Ariarthes  
conspired  
against him  
and,

2444

Thei took a galaunt born of lough lynage,  
Callid Ballas, of ther aqueyntaunce,  
And affermede, al of o corage,  
How he was sone & iust heir in substaunce  
To Epiphanes, & next heir in alliaunce,  
To succeede, bi toknis affermyng,  
Next in Surrye to be crownid kyng.

2448 taking a low-  
born youth  
named Balas,  
maintained  
that he was  
the son of  
Epiphanes and  
rightful heir to  
the throne.

2452

2422. to] in B, R, J. 2424. brothir] brouht B.

2427. &amp;] om. R. 2436. worthi] gret H, R 3.

2437. Attilius] Actilius J, R 3, Attalus P.

2438. Ariarathes P. 2447. Ballas] Prompalus (througout) P.

They called  
him Alexander  
and made him  
king in spite  
of Demetrius.  
First beaten by  
Demetrius, he  
afterwards  
overcame him;

Alisaundre of purpos thei hym calle,  
Because thei thouhte of persone he was able;  
Set hym up in his roiall stall,  
Maugre Demetrius, cruel & vengable.  
And Fortune was to them fauourable,  
Made ther purpos fynalli tauaille,  
With whom Demetrius hadde a gret bataille.

2456

This Alisaundre, which namyd was Ballas,  
Be Demetrius, as put is in memorie,  
First ouercome; but\* aftir fill this caas,  
He of Demetrie hadde the victorie,  
An[d] to encres of his roial glorie,  
Of fortune be sodeyn auenture  
Ballas the feeld dede on hym recure.

2460

but as soon as  
he was crowned  
king he became  
a tyrant and  
was ungrateful  
to his  
benefactors.

Thus be promocioun of thes kynges thre,  
Whan he was crownid kyng of al Surrye,  
To fals extorsioun & hatful cruelte  
This Alisaundre his wittis dede applie,  
To robberyng, pillage and eek tyrannye,  
And despised, shortli to conclude,  
The said[e] kynges of ingratitude.

2468

He no longer  
knew himself,  
and married  
Cleopatra,  
Ptolemy's  
daughter,

He hadde forget his staat of pouerte,  
Knew nat hymself, of fals ambicioun  
Weddid\* the douhtir of myhti Tholome,  
Callid Cleopatra, as maad is mencion.  
And al his labour in conclsion  
Was onli this, in Bochas as I reede,  
Al the kyngdam[ys] aboute hym to posseede.

2476

2480

and coveted all  
the kingdoms  
about him.  
Finally he  
made war on  
the three  
kings.

Who al coueiteth, sumtyme al doth leese;  
Oon ageyn alle hath seelde souereynte.  
And for Ballas frowardli gan\* cheese  
To holde werre with kyng Tholome,  
And with the forseid worthi kynges thre,  
Alle off assent[e] haue such weies souht,  
That be ther werkyng he was brouht to nouht.

2484

Ptolemy took  
his wife away  
from him and  
gave her to  
one Demetrius,

First Tholome from hym took his wiff,  
Cleopatra, & gaf hir in mariage  
To oon Demetrie, causyng ful gret striff,

2488

2461. Demetrius] Detryus H.

2462. ouercomen B, J — but] &amp; B, R, J, and P.

2467. be] om. H.

2476. Weddid] Weddith B, R, J, R 3.

2480. kyngdam R. 2483. gan] can B.

For he that tyme was but yong of age;  
But Ballas aftir, be ful gret outrage,  
With al his poweer, gadred nih & ferre,  
Geyn Demetrie gan to holde werre.

2492

Togidre mette proudli in bataille,  
Ballas constreyned cowardli to flee;  
And whan he sauh his poweer dide faile,  
In Arabie, a myhti strong contre,  
Zabidus, a prince of gret pouste,  
Took hym be force, he quakyng in his dreed,  
To kyng Tholome sent anon his hed.

2496

whom Balas  
attacked, but  
was forced to  
flee to Arabia,  
where he was  
slain and his  
head sent to  
Proleme.

2500

Men may too thynges considren in this caas: [289]  
Pride pun[y]shed and vnkyndenesse,  
And presumpcioun, in this man Ballas,  
Withoute title or cleym of rihtwysnesse  
Maad kyng of Surrie, set in gret worthynesse.  
What was his eende? ye get no mor of me, —  
His hed smet of & sente to Tholome.

2504

2508

## Lenvoye.

**T**HIS tragedie doth naturalli compleyne  
Vpon this vice callid vnkyndenesse,  
Which to pun[y]she is torment non nor peine,  
Rigour condigne, flagelle nor duresse,  
Enprisownyng nor non erthli distresse,  
That may suffise, breeffli to conclude,  
Ageyn the vice of ingratitude.

2512

No punishment  
is too severe  
for ingratitude.

Alle creaturis on this vice compleyne,  
Lawe, nature decrees rihtwysnesse;  
This monstre in kynde doth the liht desteyne,  
Of eueri vertu dirketh the brihtnesse.  
Alisaundre can bern herof witnesse,  
Which to his foorthris, he of techchis rude  
Shewe[d] ageynward gret ingratitude.

2516

It darkens the  
brightness of  
every virtue.

2520

2498. contre] Cite H.

2500. This line is replaced by the next to last of preceding stanza H.

2521. forthereres R, H 5, forthereres H, J, furthers P — of] of  
his R, J.



The treble  
chain of  
Cerberus, the  
hunger and  
thirst of  
Tantalus, the  
torments of  
Ixion and  
Typhon, were  
insufficient to  
chastise those  
who are  
ungrateful to  
their old  
friends.

Noble Princes,  
do not allow  
ungrateful folk  
to approach  
you; no vice  
is more hateful  
than theirs.

Of Herberus thynfernal treble cheyne,  
Nor of Tantalus hunger nor thrustnesse, 2524  
Of Ixion or Ticius, bothe tweyne,  
Rekne the[r] turment, remembre ther sharpnesse;  
Al wer to lital to chastise or redresse  
The hatful vice of them that can delude 2528  
Ther freendis olde bi fals ingratitude.  
Noble Princis, which in your demeyne  
Han gouernaunce of al worldli richesse,  
Geyn folk vnkynde looke that ye disdeyne, 2532  
Suffre\* hem nat haue non interesse  
For taproche to your hih noblesse;  
For ther is no vice mor hatful to conclude,  
Than is the vice of ingratitude. 2536

[Here Bochas writeth of the rebellions and seditions in Rome, betwixt Tribunys and comouns.] <sup>1</sup>

I must now  
write about  
Caius and  
Tiberius  
Gracchus, who  
were authors of  
great seditions  
in Rome.

**F**OLWYNG myn auctour in stories mervelious,  
I mut now write the strong rebellious  
Of Gaivs first & of Tiberius,  
And of ther grete hatful sediciouns 2540  
Meued in Roome tween tribuns & comouns;  
And bi ther stryues how thei gan conspire  
For tatteyne falsli to thempire.

Caius was  
made tribune  
in the Roman  
year 600,

The yeer sixe hundred be computacioun, 2544  
Gayus Gracchus maad tribun in that age,  
Aftir the cites first fundacioun,  
Which turnyd aftir to ful gret damage  
Of comoun proffit; for bi the\* mortal rage, 2548  
Tumulte & noise of comouns in the toun,  
Caused a gret part of ther destruccioun.

and by his  
equal  
division of the  
public lands  
between rich  
and poor he  
caused  
dissensions  
among the  
people.

For in departyng of chaumpayne heritages  
Atwen the worthi & poore of the cite 2552  
Bi egal porciouns, Gracchus with fair langages  
Hadde gretli meued al the\* comounte.  
Bi which occasioun, in stori men may see,  
Anothir Gracchus, callid the secounde, 2556  
Was slayn in Roome & lowe leid on grounde.

2523. Cerberus H. 2524. thrustynesse H.

2526. 2nd ther] the R, J. 2533. Suffre] Suffreth B, J.

2535. to] om. R.

2540. ther] the R. 2548. the] ther B, R, J. 2551. This  
stanza is transposed with the next R. 2554. the] ther B, R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 118 recto.

¶ Aftr this deth of Graccus, as I reede,  
Was chose a tribun callid Munycius,  
Which fordede the lawes alle in deede  
Of olde Graccus callid[e] Gayus.  
But he that was named Tiberius,  
With help of Flaccus, tribuns of estat,  
In the Capitoile began a gret debat.

2560 After the death  
of the second  
Graccus,  
Caius' laws  
were repealed  
by Mancinus,  
and Tiberius  
and Flaccus  
revolted,

Thei wer supported bi the comounte,  
Bi vois of peple, the woord of no man knowe;  
For Graccus parti hih upon a tre  
A trompet stood & proudli gan to blowe,  
Which slay[e]n was, & fro the tre doun throwe,  
Bi which[e] slauhtre, the book makth rehersaile,  
Graccus\* wex feeble; his parti gan to faille:

2564

supported by  
the commons,  
but were forced  
to flee.

For dreed he fledde into the teritorie  
Of Ianus temple, ran up to a tour.  
Whan Tiberius, as put is in memorie,  
Sauh in the cite he hadde no fauour,  
Disespiered knew no bet socour,  
Sword set at brest [in] presence of Mynerue,  
Fulli purposed afforn hir for to sterue.

2572

Tiberius took  
refuge in the  
temple of  
Minerva;

Ther stood on bi & drouh his hand abak;  
Fro that purpos made hym to declyne.  
Thus Graccus parti goth day be day to wrak,  
And Flakkus took the temple of Lucyne, —  
His sone, his freendis [&] almost al his lyne, —  
Thei kept them strong; but maugre þer diffence  
Thei wer ther slayn be sturdi violence.

2576

2580 and Flaccus and  
his party be-  
took themselves  
to the temple  
of Lucina,  
where they  
were slain.

Whil Graccus freendis fauht for his partie, [p. 290]  
And he hymself constreyned was for\* dreed  
To preye a boy of his cumpanye,  
To take a suerd & smyte[n] of his hed.  
Set on a spere with the blood maad red,  
Sent it his mooder, compleynyng in hir teene,  
Into hir castel that callid was Misseene.

2588

Gracchus  
prayed a boy  
among his  
followers to  
smite off his  
head, which he  
did.

2592

2559. Minucius P. 2560. lawes] lawe H, law R 3.

2566. vois] noise H, noyse R 3, H 5 — woord] voice H, vois  
R 3, voice P.

2569. tre] gree H.

2571. Graccus] Flaccus B, R, J, R 3, P. Flaccus is corrected to  
Graccus in H.

2577. brest] the brest R, H — in] om. R, H, J, H 5.

2582. temple] peple H.

2585. ther] om. H — sturdi] study R. 2587. for] of B, R, J.

Thus his  
mother Cornelia  
lost all her  
children, and  
their goods  
were escheated  
to the town.

Namyd Cornelia his moder was in deede,  
Whilom douhtir to grete Scipioun.

Hir children alle slay[e]n, as I reede,  
And Graccus goodis achetid to the toun. 2596

Therof afftir maad a dyuysioun  
Bi iugement thoruhout[e] the cite,  
Wher most was neede among the comounte.

502 of Grac-  
chus' people  
were slain and  
2000 of Flaccus'  
party, of whom  
many were in-  
nocent.

Of Graccus side fyue hundred slayn & twain\* 2600  
Vpon an hill[e] callid Auentyne.

And Oppynyus, a consul, dede his peyne  
Of ther conspiryng the ground to serche & myne.

And Flaccus parti to brynge to ruine, 2604  
He slouh too thousand bi hasti iugement,  
Amongis which was many an innocent.

[How the wif of Hastrubal brent hirsilf & hir  
childre.]<sup>1</sup>

John Bochas  
again tells about  
the destruction  
of Carthage,

**H**EEER Iohn Bochas in especial  
List to remembre how Cartage newe ageyn 2608

Destroied was, & how [duc] Hasdruball  
Cam to myscheeff; the trouthe was weel seyn.

Which to reherse of newe it wer but veyn,  
Sith heer-toforn is maad cleer mencion 2612  
Bothe of ther brennyng & ther destruccioun.

and says that  
Hasdrubal's  
wife preferred  
death to servi-  
tude and burnt  
herself up to-  
gether with her  
young sons.

Sauff heer he tellith how Hastruballis wiff,  
Onli teschewen to lyuen in seruage,

Ches with hir childre for to lese hir lyff, 2616

And wilfulli, of furious corage,  
She and hir sonys, tendre & yong of age,

Among the flawmys & the colis rede  
Consumyd were\* into assches dede. 2620

Dido, whom  
Æneas betrayed,  
built the city,  
and she too  
burnt herself  
up.

Dido the firste that bilte that cite  
And made touris & the stronge wall,

Which was betrasshed falsly\* of Enee, 2624  
Afforn remembred the fires funerall, —

And aftir longe the wif of Hasdruball  
Ches rather deie with hir childre tweyne,  
Than among Romeyns for to lyue in peyne.

2600. twain] fyue B, R. 2605. too] too tho H.  
2609. duc] om. R, J — Hasdruball] Hanyball H, R 3.  
2615. to] & H. 2618. yong & tendre H.  
2620. were] was B, R, J. 2621. 2nd that] be H, R 3.  
2623. falsly] also B, R, J.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 118 verso.

[Off Machabeus Ioathas taken bi the kyng of Surre.]<sup>1</sup>

**I**N order suyng, vnto Iohn Bochas  
 Ther appeered an heuy man of siht,  
 Machabeus the worthi Ioathas,  
 Whiche ocupied for wisdam & for myht  
 Offis of prynce, [of] preesthod & of kniht;  
 Be title of Iuda of werris took themprise,  
 Be cleyrn of Leuy, as preest dede sacrefise.

2628 Jonathan Mac-  
 cabeus, prince  
 and high priest  
 of Judea,

The lawe of Iewes manli to diffende  
 With al the Lond[e] of Promyssioun,  
 This Ioathas ful knihtli dede entende  
 Ageyn al enmyes aboute hem enviroun.  
 Til of Surrye the fals[e] kyng Tryphoun  
 Be treynys compassed & promys falsli holde  
 Took Ioathas, of whom riht now I tolde.

2632

2636 was taken  
 prisoner by the  
 deceit of Try-  
 phon, king of  
 Syria.

Machabeorum is rehersed all,  
 Of his knihthod & his worthynesse,  
 With al the tresouns in especiall  
 Wrouht be Tryphon be many gret falsnesse:  
 His subtil sleyhtis and his doubilnesse, —  
 Them to reherse, ye gete no mor of me;  
 For in the Bible the stori ye may see.

2640

2644 As the whole  
 story is told  
 in the Book of  
 I. Maccabees,  
 you'll get no  
 more of it  
 from me.

[How Demetrius the secounde lost at last his hede.]<sup>2</sup>

**B**V T I will turne to Demetrius  
 That callid was Demetrius be secounde,  
 Which bi descent cam from Anthiochus,  
 And bi his manhod, as it was weel founde,  
 Dedede the pride of kyng Ballas confounde,  
 Callid Alisaundre, which bi gret outrage  
 Hadde putte his fader from his heritage.

2652 Demetrius the  
 Second, a de-  
 scendant of An-  
 tiochus, who  
 confounded the  
 pride of Balas,

This Demetrius, famous & notable,  
 Vpon Parthois hadde many gret victorie,  
 Til kyng Arsacides, double and deceyuable,  
 Hymself delityng gretli in veynglorie,

2656 won many  
 victories over  
 the Parthians,  
 but was finally  
 captured by  
 Arsaces.

2636. Promyssioun] punyssioun H. 2637, 41. Ionathas H.

2659. veynglorie] victorie H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 118 verso.

<sup>2</sup> MS. leaf J. 118 verso.



Bi his sleiht fraudis deceptorie, 2660  
 Vndir a shadwe of feynnyng & fals cheer  
 Took Demetrius vnwarli prisioneer.

Arsaces, to his  
 shame, after  
 leading him  
 about Syria in  
 poor array,  
 made him  
 marry his  
 daughter against  
 his will. And to gret sclandre & hyndryng\* of his name,  
 Arsacides bamaner moquerye 2664  
 Made Demetrius, for despiht & shame,  
 Poorli arraied, of hate & gret envie  
 For to be lad thoruhout al Surrye;  
 Made hym aftir, bi gret auisement, 2668  
 To wedde his douhtir ageyn his owne entent.

When Arsaces  
 died, Demetrius  
 tried to escape This Demetrius was kept out of pres, [p. 291]  
 That but fewe hadde of hym [a] siht,  
 Vnto tyme that Arsacides 2672  
 Was ded & passed, for al his gret[e] myht.  
 Than he caste tescape away be fliht;  
 And secreli tacomplisshe his entent,  
 He gat hym counsail that was of his assent. 2676

in disguise, with  
 the help of a  
 knight called  
 Callimandrus; Gallymandrus, a lord of that contre,  
 Which that was of his assent in deede,  
 In ther fliht to keepe hem mor secre  
 Made Demetrius for to chaunge his weede, 2680  
 And preuy weies foorth he dede hym leede.  
 But al for nouht; his fliht was but in veyn,  
 For bi strong pursut he was take ageyn.

but he was  
 caught and  
 brought back  
 to his wife. After their two  
 children were  
 born, his chain  
 was again  
 loosened, Afftir bi constreynt presentid to the kyng, 2684  
 That he gan wexe weri of his lyff,  
 Kept mor streihtli, folk on hym waityng,  
 And maugre hym presentid to his wiff,  
 With hir tabide ful heuy and pensyff. 2688  
 But whan thei hadde childre atween hem tweyne,  
 To go mor large loosnyd was his cheyne.

and three times  
 he endeavoured  
 to escape. And thus he hadde space & fre licence  
 To gon and comen at his auauntage; 2692  
 For whil his wiff heeld with hym residence,  
 Thei dempte his childre wer suffisaunt hostage.  
 But he was euere vnstable of his corage,  
 With Gallymandrus the forseid[e] kniht 2696  
 Thre tyme take & brouht ageyn be fliht.

2663. hyndryng & sclaudryng B, R, J.  
 2671. a] om. R, J. 2677. Callimandrus P.  
 2679. mor] om. H. 2686. awaityng H. 2689. children R.

And for he was so dyuers manyfold,  
 Kyng Fraactes, in tokne he was vnstable,  
 Sent hym thre dees forgid squar of gold,  
 To pleye raket as a child chaungable, —  
 His disposicioun was so variable.  
 But for to restreyne his condicioun,  
 He was efft take & fetrid in prisoun.

But whan Fortune hadde youen hym a pull,  
 Bi many dyuers stra[u]nge aduersite,  
 To punshe hym mor Pharactes wexeth dull.  
 And Demetrius of prisoun was maad free,  
 Ful restored ageyn to his contre,  
 Wex proud ageyn, of newe it is so fall,  
 That he was hated of his lieges all.

Cleopatra, his mooder, that was queen  
 Of al Egipt & wiff to Tholome,  
 Was with hir lord at striff, who list to seen,  
 Which turnid affir to gret aduersite.  
 But to strengthe hir parti thus wrouht she,  
 Made hir sone for to take on honde  
 For hir to fihte ageyn[es] hir husbonde.

But Tholomeus callid Euergetes,  
 Geyn Demetrius diffendyng his contre,  
 Made Zebenna to putte hymself in pres,  
 Sone of a marchaunt, born of low degre,  
 To make a cleyrn bi fals subtilite,  
 Of al Surrye to haue pocessioun,  
 For hym aleggyng title of adopcioun.

He to be sone to [old] Anthiochus,  
 Cleymyng therbi the kyngdam of Surrye,  
 Onli texclude the said Demetrius.  
 And Tholomeus, to susteene the partie  
 Of Zebenna, with al his cheualrie  
 Gadrid in Egipt & contrees enviroyn,  
 Ageyn Demetrius proudli is come doun.

And Fortune with hir double face  
 Caused the cuntre bi rebelloun,  
 That Demetrius stood cleene out of grace;  
 Werbi the peeples of al that regeoun

King Phraates,  
 seeing that he  
 was as full  
 of whims as a  
 child, sent him  
 three gold dice  
 to play racket  
 with and locked  
 him up.

2704

But afterwards  
 not wanting to  
 punish him any  
 more, he let  
 him out, at  
 which Deme-  
 trius became so  
 insufferable  
 that all his  
 subjects hated  
 him.

2708

2712 Cleopatra, his  
 mother, was at  
 strife with her  
 husband Euer-  
 getes, and in-  
 duced  
 Demetrius to  
 take her side,  
 whereupon,  
 2716 Euergetes in-  
 cited Zebina,  
 son of a mer-  
 chant, to lay  
 claim to his  
 kingdom, and,  
 2720 supporting him  
 with an army,

2724

2728